

# The MODERN LANGUAGE FORUM

Organ of the Modern Language Association  
of Southern California

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SMITH COLLEGE

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# MODERN LANGUAGE FORUM

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## SULLY-PRUDHOMME

POUR ÉCHAPPER à la sensiblerie exagérée des premiers romantiques, les Parnassiens, disciples de Leconte de Lisle, se tournèrent vers le passé. Ils s'intéressaient au folk-lore, à la religion et à la philosophie des civilisations naissantes. Ils se souciaient peu de la vie contemporaine car ils doutaient de sa valeur. Ils louaient la mort et l'anéantissement. On a bien dit: "La poésie parnassienne est le chant de la mort qui enveloppe le chant de la vie."<sup>1</sup> Cependant ils se persuadaient que "l'art est plus fort que la mort."

Sully-Prudhomme, dont nous allons examiner l'oeuvre, représente une réévaluation des valeurs esthétiques et morales. Son premier recueil *Stances et Poèmes*, date de 1865 et son dernier poème, *Le Bonheur*, fut publié en 1888, car *Les Epaves*, qui parurent posthumes en 1908, furent composées avant 1870. *Le Testament poétique* (1900), *La vraie religion selon Pascal* (1905) et *La Psychologie du libre arbitre* (1906) sont des ouvrages en prose qui révèlent les tendances esthétiques et métaphysiques de ses dernières années.

René-François-Armand Prudhomme naquit à Paris le 16 mars 1839 et mourut dans sa ville natale en 1907. La maison où il vit le jour, 34, rue des Petites-Ecuries, se trouve dans un quartier plutôt modeste. Les premiers rapports de notre poète furent avec ce Paris qui travaille; il exprime souvent son amour pour les humbles. Ses parents n'étaient pas parisiens de naissance. On ignore le pays d'origine de son père qui mourut quand Sully-Prudhomme n'avait que deux ans. Sa mère, née Clotilde Caillat, était originaire de Lyon; elle garda toujours vivant dans son coeur son amour pour cette ville et elle inspira à son fils un pareil sentiment. Il y allait souvent. Son ami intime, Gaston Paris, a noté en lui de nombreux traits du tempérament lyonnais,<sup>2</sup> "profond sérieux, un perpétuel reploiement sur soi-même, préoccupation des choses religieuses, tendance à l'idéalisation."

Sa première éducation fut dirigée par sa mère qui n'était plus très

<sup>1</sup>E. Zyromski, *op cit.*, p. 43.

<sup>2</sup>G. Paris: *Penseurs et Poètes*, p. 171.

jeune quand elle épousa son père dont la mort prématurée assombrit les premiers souvenirs de notre poète. Il nous en donne l'impression :

En ce temps-là, je me rappelle  
Que je ne pouvais concevoir  
Pourquoi, se pouvant faire belle,  
Ma mère était toujours en noir.

Car déjà la douleur sacrée  
M'avait posé son crêpe noir,  
Déjà je portais sa livrée :  
J'étais en deuil sans le savoir.<sup>3</sup>

Madame Prudhomme, accompagnée de son fils, s'installa chez son frère et sa soeur, tous les deux célibataires. Ceux-ci étaient d'excellentes gens aux idées plutôt bornées. Un tel milieu ne pouvait que rendre timide et craintif cet enfant exubérant. Notre poète parle de son "enfance douloureuse, et de sa "jeunesse manquée." L'atmosphère était très bourgeoise. Sully-Prudhomme appartenait donc à la bourgeoisie. Il le détestait, quoiqu'elle ait laissé son empreinte sur sa poésie. En effet, il était clairement aussi bourgeoise que Vigny était aristocrate.

A l'âge de huit ans il fut admis dans un pensionnat à Bourg-la-Reine. Sa mère et son oncle, rêvant pour lui d'un bel avenir, voulaient l'écarter de la ville et lui donner une bonne éducation. La vie était très dure dans cette école pour un enfant si impressionnable. Il nous raconte l'horreur de cette existence :

On voit dans les sombres écoles  
Des petits qui pleurent toujours ;  
Les autres font leurs cabrioles,  
Eux, ils restent au fond des cours.

O mères, coupables absentes,  
Qu'alors vous leur paraissez loin !  
À ces créatures naissantes  
Il manque un indicible soin.

Mais, tout ingrates que vous êtes,  
Ils ne peuvent vous oublier,  
Et cachent leurs petites têtes,  
En sanglotant, sur l'oreiller. (*Premières Solitudes*)

On ignore la durée de son séjour à Bourg-la-Reine d'où il passa à l'Institution Massin. Là, il se lia avec Paul Sédille, fils d'une amie de Madame Prudhomme, et, plus tard, il entra dans la pension Bousquet où

<sup>3</sup>*Les Solitudes: Le Premier Deuil.*

il acheva ses premières études. C'est ici qu'il trouva l'ami de toute sa vie, Léon-Bernard Desrosnes, qui était du même âge, et qui nous a donné le seul récit de cette période de la vie de notre poète.<sup>4</sup> Selon Desrosnes, tout le monde aimait Sully-Prudhomme qui exerçait une bonne influence sur ses compagnons d'école. Tolérant des petites méchancetés de ses camarades, il se soumettait toutefois assez volontiers aux règlements. Il haïssait toute injustice. Il était bon élève et gagna plusieurs prix. Quand il lui fallut faire son choix entre les lettres et les sciences, il opta pour la littérature, ce qui contraria vivement sa famille; mais, plus tard, sur les conseils de ses maîtres, il se ravisa. Malheureusement, au moment où il se proposait d'entrer à l'Ecole Polytechnique, il fut frappé d'une maladie des yeux et fut forcé d'abandonner ses études. Il quitta Paris pour visiter Lyon.

Après un court séjour dans cette ville, il revint à Paris où il obtint son baccalauréat en 1858. Il trouva, comme beaucoup d'autres, qu'il n'avait aucun moyen d'existence. Un de ses camarades de lycée était un certain Schneider, dont le père était gérant des établissements Creusot. Grâce à l'intervention de Schneider, notre futur poète reçut un emploi de comptable. On le trouve maintenant dans cette morne ville d'usines où il se sent accablé par le matérialisme qui l'entoure.<sup>5</sup> Il ne fut probablement pas mécontent quand sa famille le rappela à Paris. Malgré tout, il avait conçu une certaine admiration pour la puissance du génie humain qui discipline les forces aveugles de la matière inanimée et les met en oeuvre, un vif plaisir à la vue des miracles de la science et de l'invention et une nouvelle confiance dans l'énergie et l'industrie des hommes. Il révèle bientôt dans ses écrits une appréciation sincère pour l'homme qui travaille.<sup>6</sup> L'expérience élargit son horizon.

De retour à Paris en 1860, il devint clerc de notaire et entra à l'Ecole de Droit. Il étudiait consciencieusement mais, comme l'indique son *Journal Intime*, son esprit était occupé ailleurs. Comme Balzac, il conçut un dégoût extrême pour les fourberies des hommes et il adopta une attitude pessimiste. Il est clair qu'il aimait peu le droit car il se déclare "un clerc occupé" et "un poète désœuvré". La vie était monotone et il s'en consolait par l'activité intellectuelle. Le *Journal Intime* nous apprend qu'il étudiait les sciences et la philosophie. Il lisait Platon, Kant, Spinoza, Descartes, Montaigne et Pascal. Il lut aussi l'*Essai de philosophie critique* de Vacherot, la *Philosophie du Bonheur* de Paul Janet

<sup>4</sup>L. Bernard Desrosnes: *Sur le vif, portraits en crayon*, Paris, 1895.

<sup>5</sup>*Les Epreuves*: Une Damnée.

<sup>6</sup>*Les Solitudes*: La Chanson des Métiers.

et il fit la découverte de Ruskin. Il étendit ses lectures jusqu'aux chefs-d'oeuvres poétiques, fut vivement frappé par le *Faust* de Goethe et s'enthousiasma fort pour *La Légende des Siècles* de Victor Hugo. Mais il ne se donnait pas tout entier à ses études car il passait bien des soirées chez ses amis, les Sédille et chez le sculpteur, Henri Chapu.

Nous arrivons maintenant au moment où il se consacra définitivement à la carrière littéraire. Vers 1855, les étudiants de l'École de Droit avaient formé le groupe de la Conférence La Bruyère pour examiner et discuter la littérature, l'art et la philosophie. Ce groupe se réunissait toutes les semaines; d'abord dans une maison privée, ensuite dans un café, et enfin à la mairie du III<sup>e</sup>. arrondissement. De 1857 à 1865, on publia un *Annuaire* qui donnait un compte-rendu de leurs délibérations. Les membres de ce groupe représentaient divers rangs sociaux et divers points de vue religieux et politiques. Ils possédaient en commun l'esprit de camaraderie, le goût des belles lettres et le besoin d'échanger des idées. On discutait des sujets de toute sorte. On reçut Sully-Prudhomme en 1861 et l'*Annuaire* de cette année rend compte de sa collaboration littéraire. Ainsi, à partir de 1860, Sully-Prudhomme se donnait-il à la poésie.

Dans l'*Annuaire* de 1862 parut *Le Rire de Désespoir*, 154 vers de mètre irrégulier et d'un style un peu oratoire. Dans ce poème l'homme accuse Dieu de son "silence éternel." Il se peut que cela soit un blasphème mais, si Dieu, pour punir l'homme, l'anéantit, qu'importe? L'amour, les affaires, la guerre n'apportent que des chagrins. Faut-il que l'homme passe sa vie dans des douleurs pendant que le Créateur reste là-haut dans la félicité, indifférent aux souffrances humaines? C'est incroyable! Est-ce que Dieu ne s'attendrira pas enfin? Mais pourquoi tarder si longtemps? L'homme se prosterne et attend; il ne reçoit pour réponse que le silence.

Alors, debout, affreux, devant le noir mystère,  
L'homme, éclatant de rire, essuya son genou.  
Ce fut le rire de Voltaire;  
L'homme, en perdant l'espoir, était devenu fou.

On voit ici sans difficulté le parallèle avec *Le Mont des Oliviers* de Vigny et avec *Rolla* de Musset.

Sully-Prudhomme fut accueilli cordialement par ses camarades de la Conférence, et dans cette atmosphère d'amitié le poète se sentit plus rassuré. Il trouvait l'occasion de lire ses poésies dans les salons fréquentés

par les gens de lettres. Mais évidemment de telles récitation étaient pour lui, qui avait l'âme modeste, une espèce de supplice. *Le Journal Intime* donne des témoignages de son irritation. Comme on lui demandait souvent *Le Vase Brisé*, il s'écria un jour, à bout de patience, "Qu'il se brise sur leur nez, ce vase!"

En 1862 il offrit quelques vers à *La Revue des Deux Mondes*. On les rejeta promptement. La même année, le libraire Charpentier commença la publication de la *Revue Nationale et Etrangère* dont les rédacteurs furent Taine, Baudelaire et Ménard. En 1863 ce journal imprima deux poèmes de Sully Prudhomme: ce fut son début officiel. Ses amis de la Conférence La Bruyère le présentèrent à Leconte de Lisle et à Hérédia. *Le Journal* nous apprend qu'il devint membre du Cénacle le 6 février 1864. Sully-Prudhomme avait beaucoup d'admiration pour Leconte mais il est clair qu'il ne le prit pas comme guide. Il s'inspirait plutôt de Musset que Leconte de Lisle jugeait assez médiocre, malgré sa grâce et sa fantaisie. Sully-Prudhomme nous dit franchement dans son *Journal* qu'il n'était pas toujours de l'avis de ses amis: "Je me garde de critiquer les tendances qui ont leur raison d'être, mais je vais où se portent les miennes." Ce fut Sainte-Beuve qui, le premier, comprit en 1865 la portée de Sully-Prudhomme.<sup>7</sup>

Le poète était arrivé maintenant à la fin de son noviciat littéraire. Son premier recueil, *Stances et Poèmes*, fut publié en 1865 par Achille Faure. Sainte-Beuve en fit la revue: "Son volume est très plein, trop plein même, s'il me permet de le lui dire." Sully-Prudhomme reconnut la justice de cette critique et, dans l'édition de 1869, il améliora le recueil et le divisa en cinq parties: *La Vie Intérieure, Jeunes Filles, Femmes, Mélanges, Poèmes*. C'est la poésie d'un jeune homme ardent, enthousiaste, plein de belles ambitions. L'auteur désire persuader le monde de la vérité de son propre idéal, celui du jeune doctrinaire de 1860, c'est-à-dire, l'union des hommes et le triomphe de la raison et de la vérité. Il

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<sup>7</sup>"M. Sully-Prudhomme ne paraît appartenir à aucune des écoles aujourd'hui distinctes et définies; il aurait plutôt la noble ambition de les concilier et de réunir en lui ce qu'elles ont de bon. Habile à la forme, il ne dédaigne pas l'idée, et parmi les idées il n'en adopte point exclusive . . . Nous avons faire à un poète de talent, qui ne dit non ni à la sensibilité, ni à la liberté, ni à la couleur, ni à la mélodie, ni à la civilisation moderne. Que de choses! Je m'explique par là que les jeunes amis de M. Sully-Prudhomme soient fiers de lui . . . Notre estime, celle de tous les lecteurs, est acquise au jeune poète. Je suspends mon jugement sur l'ensemble mon pronostic sur le lendemain: je me contente de demander, en général, à la poésie de M. Sully-Prudhomme un peu plus d'air et de dégagement." *Nouv. Lundis*, X, De la poésie en 1865, 3e.art.)

n'approuve pas cette espèce d'austérité qui viole les instincts du coeur ; il rejette également les satisfactions grossières. Les véritables plaisirs, ce sont ceux de l'amant, du poète, de l'artiste et du penseur. L'homme doit chercher le Beau. Ainsi, notre poète déclare-t-il qu'il veut consacrer sa vie à l'art qui est l'harmonie nécessaire de l'idéal et du réel. L'artiste doit renoncer aux satisfactions mondaines ; la gloire, même infidèle, lui fournira le courage et la force, et il verra peut-être sa pensée renaître et s'épanouir dans le coeur de ses semblables. Écoutons-le dans les vers suivants sous titre de *Je me croyais poète* :

La gloire ! Oh ! surnager sur cette immense houle  
 Qui, dans son flux hautain noyant les noms obscurs,  
 Des brumes du passé se précipite et roule  
     Aux horizons futurs !  
 Voir mon oeuvre flotter sur cette mer humaine,  
 D'un bout du monde à l'autre, et par delà ma mort,  
 Comme un fier pavillon que la vague ramène  
     Seul, mais vainqueur, au port !  
 Ce rêve ambitieux remplira ma jeunesse,  
 Mais, si l'air ne s'est point de ma vie animé,  
 Que dans un autre coeur mon poème renaiss,  
     Qu'il vibre et soit aimé.

Toute cette poésie est virile et optimiste, mais elle ne nous montre pas encore un auteur en pleine possession de ses talents et en complète connaissance de son âme. Il faut attendre pour cela *La Vie Intérieure*. Nous éprouvons, presque tous, des élucubrations complexes sans nous en étonner beaucoup. Pour Sully-Prudhomme ces opérations de l'esprit constituent une merveille perpétuelle. Il les analyse.\* Il a le coeur tendre ; il possède une sensibilité presque féminine ; il souffre, mais moins de la légèreté, de l'indifférence ou de la trahison de l'objet aimé que de ses contacts avec une intelligence fine et exigeante, éprise de vérité, qui critique et raille ses rêves chéris. Il existe donc une lutte continuelle entre l'esprit et le coeur. *La Vie Intérieure* révèle un conflit insoluble et éternel entre la raison et la foi.

Ce conflit commença quand il se trouva dans la nécessité ou d'accepter ou de rejeter la religion de sa mère. Ses études scientifiques l'avait amené à douter de cette foi traditionnelle. En visite chez ses parents catholiques de Lyon, il les trouva fort troublés par ses idées libérales. Une nuit, il se réveilla d'un songe et trouva soudainement ses doutes dissipés et sa foi renouvelée. Il se leva et pria. Tout était pour

\**L'Imagination, La Mémoire, L'Habitude.*

le mieux. Mais, de retour à Paris, il reprit ses lectures critiques et scientifiques et l'indécision s'empara de nouveau de son esprit.<sup>9</sup>

En 1860, le prestige d'Auguste Comte allait grandissant. Littré, Taine et Renan avaient adopté sa nouvelle philosophie positive. On ne s'étonnera donc point que Sully-Prudhomme en subit l'influence. Cependant cette philosophie ne pouvait pleinement satisfaire l'admirateur et le disciple de Pascal.<sup>10</sup> Plus qu'aucun autre peut-être son poème *Intus* révèle son angoisse morale et ses crises de conscience:

L'Intelligence dit au coeur:  
 "Le monde n'a pas un bon père.  
 Vois, le mal est partout vainqueur."  
 Le coeur dit: "Je crois et j'espère.

Espère, ô ma soeur, crois un peu:  
 C'est à force d'aimer qu'on trouve;  
 Je suis immortel, je sens Dieu."  
 L'Intelligence lui dit: "Prouve!"

Il médite aussi sur l'existence de l'âme:

J'ai dans mon coeur, j'ai sous mon front  
 Une âme invisible et présente;  
 Ceux qui doutent la chercheront:  
 Je la répands pour qu'on la sente.

et à ceux qui nient qu'il existe un Idéal, il répond:

La lune est grande, le ciel clair  
 Et plein d'astres, la terre est blême,  
 Et l'âme du monde est dans l'air,  
 Il rêve à l'étoile suprême,

A celle qu'on n'aperçoit pas,  
 Mais dont la lumière voyage  
 Et doit venir jusqu'ici-bas  
 Enchanter les yeux d'un autre âge.

Quand luira cette étoile un jour,  
 La plus belle et la plus lointaine,  
 Dites-lui qu'elle eut mon amour,  
 Aux derniers de la race humaine. (*L'Idéal*)

<sup>9</sup>"Je redevins ce que j'étais auparavant: un chercheur inquiet, désabusé, mais non découragé. J'avais gagné à cette expérience de savoir ce que c'est que la foi, et, par suite, d'en contracter le respect." (*Journal Intime*.)

<sup>10</sup>"Pascal, je t'admire, tu es mien. Je te pénètre comme si je pensais en toi ... Sois mon maître, adopte-moi!" (*Journal Intime*.)

Enfin il réplique à ceux qui ne croient pas à l'immortalité par quelques-uns de ses plus beaux vers :

Bleus ou noirs, tous aimés, tous beaux,  
Des yeux sans nombre ont vu l'aurore;  
Ils dorment au fond des tombeaux,  
Et le soleil se lève encore.

Les nuits, plus douces que les jours,  
Ont enchanté des yeux sans nombre;  
Les étoiles brillent toujours,  
Et les yeux se sont remplis d'ombre.

Oh! qu'ils aient perdu leur regard,  
Non, non, cela n'est pas possible!  
Ils se sont tournés quelque part  
Vers ce qu'on nomme l'invisible;

Et comme les astres penchants  
Nous quittent, mais au ciel demeurent,  
Les prunelles ont leurs couchants,  
Mais il n'est pas vrai qu'elles meurent.

Bleus ou noirs, tous aimés, tous beaux,  
Ouverts à quelque immense aurore,  
De l'autre côte des tombeaux  
Les yeux qu'on ferment voient encore!

(*La Vie Intérieure: Les Yeux.*)

Mais l'esprit scientifique refuse de se contenter de la foi seule. La raison reprend son autorité et nous retrouvons un exemple de la vacillation entre la foi et le scepticisme, entre le désir de croire et l'impuissance de croire.<sup>11</sup> Quoique'une allusion dans le *Journal* (1862) le montre "géné par le catholicisme", il révèle aussi le pouvoir que les cérémonies religieuses exercent sur lui.<sup>12</sup> Pour Sully-Prudhomme il était difficile d'accepter une doctrine métaphysique. Il voulait des principes plus positifs. Il écrit dans son *Journal*: "une nature aveugle et fatale révolte ma raison." Ces poèmes, *Les Épreuves* et *La Vie Intérieure*, nous démontrent sa sincérité. Ces vers constituent un document très humain, tableau touchant de ces luttes de l'âme que nous éprouvons tous, sans pouvoir en atténuer l'angoisse par l'expression poétique. Pour lui c'était un combat sans fin.

Considérons maintenant un autre aspect de la vie du poète. Que pen-

<sup>11</sup>*Les Épreuves*: Doute, Piété Hardie, Le Tombeau.

<sup>12</sup>*Les Épreuves*: Bonne Mort, La Confession.

sait-il de la femme et de l'amour? Il semble bien que "l'Éternel Féminin" l'attira de très bonne heure. Dans une lettre de 1875, il nous apprend que, à l'âge de huit ans, il avait déjà donné son cœur à une jeune fille, amie de sa famille. Il en relate les circonstances dans certains vers des *Stances et Poèmes*, sous titre de "Jeunes Filles". À douze ans, il s'énamoure d'une petite fille du même âge.<sup>13</sup> Trois années plus tard, il n'était pas si sûr de son âme. Comme la plupart des adolescents, il était timide et gauche; mais, en même temps, il était dominé par la belle passion. Il rêvait de souffrir, de mourir même pour la bien-aimée. Écoutons son récit à la fois charmant et touchant.

Vous aviez l'âge où flotte encore  
La double natte sur le dos,  
Mais où l'enfant qu'elle décore  
Sent le prix de pareils fardeaux;

L'âge où l'oeil déjà nous évite,  
Quand, sous des vêtements moins courts,  
Devant sa mère, droite et vite,  
On va tous les matins aux cours.

\* \* \* \* \*

Alors mon idéal suprême  
N'était pas l'inouï bonheur,  
En aimant, d'être aimé moi-même,  
Mais d'en mourir avec honneur;

De vous arracher votre estime  
Sous les tenailles des bourreaux,  
Dans un martyr magnanime,  
Car les enfants sont des héros!

\* \* \* \* \*

Comme un page épris d'une reine,  
Je n'avais d'autre ambition  
Que de ramasser dans l'arène  
Votre gant aux pieds d'un lion!

Mais une demoiselle sage  
Ne laisse pas traîner son gant;  
Le vôtre, un jour, sur mon passage  
Echappa de vos doigts pourtant.

<sup>13</sup>*Les Vaines Tendresses: Enfantillage.*

C'était au parloir du collège,  
Pas un lion sur mon chemin.  
—"Allons! courage!" me disais-je,  
Le devoir me poussait la main.

Mais mon trouble demandait grâce  
Au défi de ce gant perdu,  
Et c'est le dernier de ma classe,  
Madame, qui vous l'a rendu.<sup>14</sup>

Puisqu'il n'avait pas la douce joie de rendre des services à la bien-aimée, il s'en consolait un peu en songeant à elle et en faisant des vers en son honneur. Plus tard, il rappelle ces souvenirs d'enfance.<sup>15</sup>

Comme le dit notre poète, tout cela n'est qu'enfantillage, mais cela est dit néanmoins avec grâce et avec esprit. Cela indique qu'il avait grand besoin de cette sollicitude dont une femme pourrait l'entourer. La tendresse est plus que l'amitié mais elle ne va pas aussi loin que l'amour. Sa vive sensibilité n'est pas grossière, mais plutôt raffinée.<sup>16</sup> Elle témoigne d'un véritable respect pour l'objet aimé, quoiqu'il ne soit jamais prude, comme on peut en juger par son *Journal*. Il est profondément ému quand une jeune fille, "belle et fière", fait preuve de confiance à son égard. Cela le touche bien plus qu'un aveu d'amour.<sup>17</sup>

Les conceptions de la beauté sont étroitement attachées à celle de l'amour. La femme voudrait réaliser l'idéal moral qu'elle inspire autour d'elle. Les poètes dépeignent la femme comme douée des traits et des qualités qu'ils voudraient trouver en elle. De même chez Sully-Prudhomme. Son idéal de la beauté féminine est lié de très près à la tendresse et au respect qui enluminent sa conception de l'amour.<sup>18</sup>

Cependant ce serait plutôt la grâce que l'amour qui parle plus puissamment au cœur de cet amant,<sup>19</sup> et, en effet, il avoue que la beauté le repousse quelquefois:

L'Éternel féminin m'attire,  
Mais je ne sais comment l'aimer;  
Beauté, te voir n'est qu'un martyre,  
Te désirer n'est qu'un délire,  
Tu n'offres que pour affamer!<sup>20</sup>

<sup>14</sup>*Les Vaines Tendresses*: Fort en thème.

<sup>15</sup>*Les Epaves*: Amour d'enfance.

<sup>16</sup>Il en fait la définition: "Le plus parfait mélange du physique et du moral, dans une proportion telle que la caresse y est comme sanctifiée et jamais suivie de regrets vagues, comme dans l'excès de la passion . . . Tout cela est super-terrestre; il fait bon y rêver." (*Lettres à une amie*.)

<sup>17</sup>*Stances et Poèmes*: Le meilleur moment des amours.

<sup>18</sup>*Les Epaves*: La Vénus de Milo.

<sup>19</sup>*Les Epaves*: Fatalité.

<sup>20</sup>*Les Vaines Tendresses*: La Beauté.

Pour notre poète, l'amour est une loi de la nature : nous devons tous aimer. Mais l'amour qu'il dépeint n'est pas la passion sans bride des romantiques, mais plutôt la conception d'un Antoine Héroùët.<sup>21</sup> L'amour doit consister donc dans la recherche d'un idéal, — ce qui nous rappelle Lamartine (*Isolement*), ou, peut-être, y trouverait-on une suggestion d'un Don Juan innocent et sentimental.<sup>22</sup> Il y dépeint une franche camaraderie qui, néanmoins, change de ton à mesure que les jeunes gens s'aperçoivent instinctivement que leurs rapports deviennent plus intimes. C'est en effet cette vive sentimentalité qui en découle qui produit le désaccord qui ne tardera pas à les séparer.

Dans un monde de gens pratiques, l'affection vraie ne peut dominer le cours des événements. On marie les jeunes filles à "des hommes comme il en faut," et il faut que le véritable amant fasse ses adieux.<sup>23</sup> Vers l'âge de dix-huit ans, Sully-Prudhomme traversa une crise religieuse et mystique ; à vingt ans, il souffrit d'une crise sentimentale. Il nous en donne les détails dans son *Journal*. Une amitié de jeunesse s'épanouit en véritable amour. Il crut son amour partagé, mais c'était une erreur. Il hésitait à se déclarer. Il avoua enfin son amour dans une lettre qui resta sans réponse. Il apprit bientôt que son adorée avait donné sa foi à un rival. Profondément blessé, il pensa au suicide ; pourtant, il réussit à rassembler ses forces. Il avait aimé trop sincèrement pour ne pas éprouver de la jalousie, mais dans sa jalousie il n'y avait aucune haine. La seule vengeance qu'il désirait était que son amie inconstante et son mari pratique fussent "heureux sans poésie" et "unis par le droit seul, non pas par l'amour." Quant à lui, il avait vécu. En dépit de tout, nous dit-il,<sup>24</sup> il ne veut que faire le bonheur de l'inconstante. À ce propos, il s'adresse même au mari :

Si je pouvais aller lui dire :  
 "Elle est à vous et ne m'inspire  
 Plus rien, même plus d'amitié ;  
 Je n'en ai plus pour cette ingrate,  
 Mais elle est pâle, délicate,  
 Ayez soin d'elle par pitié.

Ecoutez-moi sans jalousie,  
 Car l'aile de sa fantaisie  
 N'a fait, hélas, que m'effleurer :

<sup>21</sup>*Les Vaines Tendresses*: Les Amours Terrestres.

<sup>22</sup>*Stances et Poèmes*: Jeunes Filles; Mon Sérail.

<sup>23</sup>*Stances et Poèmes*: Jeunes Filles; Les Adieux.

<sup>24</sup>*Stances et Poèmes*: La Jalousie.

Je ne sais comment sa main repousse,  
 Mais pour ceux qu'elle aime, elle est douce:  
 Ne la faites jamais pleurer."<sup>25</sup>

Cette affaire de coeur assombrit sa jeunesse. Elle inspire beaucoup de ses vers intimes et influence toute sa vie. Elle met son empreinte sur son lyrisme, en lui donnant une note élégiaque où le désenchantement et le découragement remplacent de plus en plus l'optimisme et l'enthousiasme jadis si naturel. Avidé d'affection, il nous dit dans ses *Lettres à une amie* combien il désirait la camaraderie féminine.<sup>26</sup>

Notre poète éprouvait une joie secrète à oublier les hommes et les affaires du monde. Il tombait alors dans une sorte de rêverie où la réalité devient songe et le songe devient réalité. C'est un Nirvana à rendre jaloux Leconte de Lisle. Mais Sully-Prudhomme était trop pratique pour s'y perdre entièrement; il remarque, en effet, dans *Rêverie*:

La Rêverie est de courte durée,  
 Frêle plaisir que la raison défend.

Il se mit à voyager. Avec plusieurs amis, Hérédia, Theuriet, Leconte de Lisle, Massenet, Louis Ménard et Lafenestre, il passa un été à Douarnenez en Bretagne pour des raisons de santé. La vie au grand air raviva ses forces; ce fut une période de rétablissement physique. Sous le titre de *Mélanges (Stances et Poèmes)* on trouve nombre d'esquisses qui reflètent ses impressions sur la Nature. Il dépeint le charme du paysage, (*À Douarnenez*), l'aspect sévère du Finistère (*La Pointe du Raz*), les lueurs de l'aube naissante (*Une Aurore*). Dans tous ces poèmes de rêverie on sent une mélancolie douce, une impression de tristesse et de solitude.

Pour nous la mer est triste, et sur les lents vaisseaux  
 Pleure la solitude aux sombres épouvantes.<sup>27</sup>

En 1866 Sully-Prudhomme accompagna Lafenestre en Italie, à Turin, Parme, Florence et Rome. Le fruit de ce voyage fut les *Croquis italiens*, espèce d'itinéraire poétique. On visita les musées et les

<sup>25</sup>*Stances et Poèmes: Femmes*, "Si je pouvais."

<sup>26</sup>"Je ne serais pas fâché d'avoir la société d'une bonne femme qui viendrait de temps en temps m'embrasser et regarder ce que j'écris pardessus mon épaule."

<sup>27</sup>*La Néréide*. Et de plus: "J'éprouve en face de la mer une lassitude de la pensée . . . Je souffre devant la mer; c'est un berceau trop puissant pour mon âme . . . J'ai la sensation d'un arrachement éternel." (*Journal Intime*.)

galeries de peintures. Il fut charmé par la grâce de Florence.<sup>28</sup> Il disputa les deux statues de *Jour* et de *Nuit* au tombeau de Guiliano de' Médicis; il fut fort impressionné par Michel-Ange et touché par la grâce de Fra Beato Angelo. Il admira plus vivement la Renaissance et ses "conquêtes de l'esthétique sur le dogme théologique" ou "la revanche de la nature sur l'ascétisme, de la chair sur l'esprit, et de la volupté sur l'extase."<sup>29</sup> Il trouva un charme serein et imposant dans les tombeaux de la Voie Appienne, éprouva de vraies délices dans la contemplation de tout ce qui se déroulait sous ses yeux.<sup>30</sup>

Les rigueurs de l'hiver refroidirent son enthousiasme et c'est avec plaisir qu'il regagna Paris. Cependant, il reprit ses voyages afin d'étudier l'art dans les Pyrénées, sur la Côte d'Azur, et, en 1876, en Belgique et en Hollande. Son dernier grand voyage eut lieu en Suisse, en 1879, avec sa soeur, mais il semble qu'il se fatigua bientôt des scènes magnifiques mais un peu froides des Alpes.

Nous avons déjà entrevu les qualités d'esprit de Sully-Prudhomme: sa fine sensibilité unie à une logique serrée, une aversion pour la foule, une impuissance de se montrer résolu, un manque de goût pour la vie pratique, le don de l'analyse pénétrante et subtil. Pour apprécier tous ces éléments, il faut lire le *Journal Intime* et les *Lettres à une amie*. On ne connaît pas l'identité de cette "amie", mais elle était sans doute une dame de traits admirables. Elle pensait à lui comme l'aurait fait une mère; il lui témoignait en retour une affection toute filiale. Évidemment l'objet de ses soupirs était le bonheur, en dépit ses tendances à la mélancolie. Il est toujours indécis.<sup>31</sup>

Sa solitude fut accentuée par la perte de sa mère en décembre 1869 et par celle de son oncle et sa tante en janvier 1870. Il s'était presque résigné à sa douleur quand la guerre franco-prussienne éclata. Il s'engagea, mais sa santé trop délicate ne put supporter cette épreuve, et l'on lui permit de rentrer à son foyer. La Commune et ses excès le remplirent de dégoût. Il n'écrivit que quelques poèmes pendant cette époque; ce ne

<sup>28</sup>"Je suis vaincu, charmé, tout à fait enchanté" *Lettre sur la peinture italienne*, pub. Rev. Bleu, 7 février, 1912)

<sup>29</sup>Ponte Sisto, Le Colysée, l'Escalier de l'Ara Coeli; même La Pescheria.

<sup>30</sup>Les Transtéverines.

<sup>31</sup>"Ne suis-je pas le jouet de toutes les influences? . . . Je ne suis pas vraiment un être raisonnable et libre, mais une sorte d'épave que le flot pousse au hasard. Je ne suis pas le travailleur de naguère, mais un rêveur triste et stérile. Ma solitude, effroyable dans ma rue bruyante, me rend odieux mon chez moi. Il n'y a pas de chez moi: il y a un appartement où je dors et où je m'éveille sans joie." (*Lettres*)

sont ni des chants militaires, ni des vers patriotiques, mais des lamentations sur les souffrances des victimes et sur les blessures de la patrie.<sup>32</sup>

Avec les années augmentèrent et sa mélancolie et sa solitude. C'est ce sentiment de la solitude qui inspire ses deux derniers recueils poétiques; *Les Solitudes* (1869); *Les Vaines Tendresses* (1875). Pascal était tourmenté par "le silence des espaces infinies," et Marguerite d'Angoulême n'a-t-elle pas dit, "Je porte plus que mon faix de l'ennui commun a toute créature bien née." On trouve ce sentiment partout chez les romantiques.<sup>33</sup> Pour Sully-Prudhomme il se révèle déjà chez le petit garçon de pension. Il y a des solitudes de toute sorte: celles des âmes qui ne se comprennent pas, celles des tempéraments qui sont en conflit, celle de l'artiste méconnu, celles des amants qui ont conscience d'une barrière infranchissable.

Les Caresses ne sont que d'inquiets transports,  
Infructueux essais d'un pauvre amour qui tente  
L'impossible union des âmes par les corps.  
Vous êtes séparés et seuls comme les morts,  
Misérables vivants que le baiser tourmente.<sup>34</sup>

Tout semble évoquer chez Sully-Prudhomme cette pensée de la solitude. L'océan est triste et solitaire:

Puis elle s'enfle encor, se creuse  
Et gémit dans sa profondeur;  
Telle, en sa force douloureuse,  
Une grande âme malheureuse  
Qu'isole sa propre grandeur.<sup>35</sup>

Il y a l'isolement éternel des étoiles de la Voie Lactée:

Et l'intime ardeur de ses flammes  
Expire aux cieux indifférents.  
Je leur ai dit: "Je vous comprends!  
Car vous ressemblez à des âmes.

Ainsi que vous, chacune luit  
Loin des soeurs qui semblent près d'elle,  
Et la solitude immortelle  
Brûle en silence dans la nuit."<sup>36</sup>

<sup>32</sup>*Impressions de Guerre*: Les Fleurs de Sang.

<sup>33</sup>Chateaubriand (*René*), Mme. De Staël (*Corinne*), Byron (*Manfred*), Vigny (*Moïse, Le Mont des Oliviers*), Musset (*La Nuit de Décembre*).

<sup>34</sup>*Les Solitudes*: Les Caresses.

<sup>35</sup>*Les Solitudes*: La Mer.

<sup>36</sup>*Les Solitudes*: La Voie Lactée.

On est même solitaire au milieu des combats de son propre cœur :

Ainsi, dans les combats que le désir te livre,  
Ne compte sur personne, ô cœur !  
N'attends pas, sous la dent, qu'un autre te délivre !  
Tu luttas quelque part où nul ne peut te suivre,  
Toujours seul, victime ou vainqueur.<sup>37</sup>

*Les Solitudes* respirent toutes la même tristesse douce, persuasive, résignée, mais non rebelle. Cette tristesse s'accroît cependant à mesure que les illusions s'évanouissent. Au commencement, Sully-Prudhomme semble faire bon accueil à la vieillesse<sup>38</sup> mais, au déclin de la vie, il voit qu'il est impossible de rappeler les années passées.<sup>39</sup> Il se demande si le terme de toute existence n'est pas le néant. Il regrette de n'avoir jamais fait la conquête définitive et totale d'un cœur féminin.<sup>40</sup> Il songe encore combien la vie eût été heureuse avec la bien-aimée idéale.<sup>41</sup> En même temps il reconnaît qu'il est difficile pour un penseur de sa trempe de trouver l'amour et le bonheur. L'accent devient triste. Nous le sentons bien dans son poème sur le mort.<sup>42</sup> La Raison veut le convaincre que le mort est la fin suprême mais son cœur ne peut se résoudre à accepter le néant. Désespéré, il se résigne à la loi de la Nature ; pourtant, fidèle à la science et à son amour pour l'humanité, il ne perd ni sa foi à la dignité de l'homme ni sa confiance au progrès des connaissances humaines.

Poètes à venir, qui saurez tant de choses,  
Et les direz sans doute en un verbe plus beau,  
Portant plus loin que nous un plus grand flambeau  
Sur les suprêmes fins et les premières causes :

Quand nos vers sacreront des pensées grandioses,  
Depuis longtemps déjà nous serons au tombeau ;  
Rien ne vivra de nous qu'un terne et froid lambeau  
De notre oeuvre enfoncé avec nos lèvres closes.

Songez que nous chantions les fleurs et les amours  
Dans un âge plein d'ombre, au mortel bruit des armes,  
Pour des cœurs anxieux que ce bruit rendait sourds ;

<sup>37</sup>*Les Solitudes*: Combats Intimes.

<sup>38</sup>*Les Solitudes*: La Vieillesse.

<sup>39</sup>*Les Vaines Tendresses*: Le Temps Perdu.

<sup>40</sup>*Les Vaines Tendresses*: Prière.

<sup>41</sup>*Les Vaines Tendresses*: Au bord de l'eau.

<sup>42</sup>*Les Vaines Tendresses*: Sur la Mort.

Lors plaignez nos chansons, où tremblaient tant d'alarmes.  
 Vous qui, mieux écoutés, ferez en d'heureux jours  
 Sur de plus hauts objets des poèmes sans larmes.<sup>43</sup>

*Les Vaines Tendresses* terminent la poésie lyrique de Sully-Prudhomme. Depuis quelque temps il se sentait porté vers la poésie scientifique et philosophique. Bien des poètes, parmi lesquels nous citerons Lamartine, Vigny et Leconte de Lisle, avaient suivi cette inspiration et lui servaient de modèle. Son premier effort dans ce genre fut une traduction du premier livre de *De Rerum Natura* de Lucrèce. Ce fut pour lui un exercice d'adaptation du style poétique à l'élucidation des idées abstraites. En 1875 il exprime la joie qu'il éprouve de se trouver d'accord avec Herbert Spencer.<sup>44</sup>

La période de la poésie philosophique de Sully-Prudhomme commence avec *Les Destins* (1872); elle se termine avec *Le Bonheur* (1888). Les limites de notre analyse ne permettent pas un examen détaillé. L'idée fondamentale de *Les Destins* n'est pas nouvelle. Voltaire y avait pensé; elle est le fond du *Jocelyn* de Lamartine, de *La Légende des Siècles* de Victor Hugo, du *Mont des Oliviers* de Vigny, et du *Qaïn* de Leconte de Lisle. L'originalité de Sully-Prudhomme consiste en ce qu'il écarte Dieu et soutient que la bien et le mal sont inséparables; conséquence inévitable de la Nature, même des hommes et des choses. Notre monde est donc en même temps le meilleur et le pire de tous les mondes possibles.

*Le Zénith* (1875) célèbre les exploits de trois aéronautes, Sivel, Croce-Spinelli et Tissandier, qui montèrent dans un ballon à la hauteur de 8000 mètres. Les deux premiers périrent de l'effort physique qu'exigeait alors un pareil exploit, mais Tissandier survécut à l'épreuve. Dans ce poème Sully-Prudhomme raconte, l'héroïsme de ces trois hommes de science et glorifie leurs sacrifices.

L'homme a toujours cherché la justice et le bonheur. Il se demande où l'on pourra enfin trouver la justice et ce que c'est que le bonheur. Sully-Prudhomme tâche de répondre à ces questions dans *La Justice* (1878) et dans *Le Bonheur* (1888). La guerre franco-prussienne lui suggéra le premier de ces poèmes; il reflète les angoisses du temps. Un inconnu anonyme, "Le Chercheur", poursuit la justice à travers le monde des faits et des idées, à l'aide de la science. Il ne la trouve nulle part dans l'univers. Il voit les luttes entre les nations; il reconnaît le

<sup>43</sup>*Les Vaines Tendresses: Aux Poètes Futurs.*

<sup>44</sup>H. Spencer: *Introduction to Social Science.*

conflit éternel établi entre les riches et les pauvres. Il doute et de la justice des hommes et de la justice divine. Il trouve cette justice enfin dans la conscience de l'homme; il est persuadé que la justice est en train de s'effectuer parmi les hommes. D'après notre poète, la meilleure société pour nous tous est celle où les hommes sont unis dans un même idéal. L'amour doit être le lien qui unira la création. Il définit noblement la Justice :

La Justice est l'amour guidé par la lumière;  
Elle ne règne point par l'équerre et l'effroi.

Sully-Prudhomme dédia ce poème à Andre Chénier dans l'épilogue.<sup>45</sup>

L'idée du Bonheur attirait Sully-Prudhomme depuis ses premières années. Dans son *Journal* (1862) il écrit :

Réflexion sur le bonheur : il ne faut pas le rêver hors des conditions de l'essence humaine ; or, notre essence comporte la satiété de l'ennui ; le bonheur n'est donc pas la satisfaction de notre essence, mais l'exercice de nos facultés ; il est terrestre.

Un peu plus tard il affirme, "Le bonheur consiste évidemment dans l'accomplissement de nos volontés et nos désirs."

Il n'y a rien de très nouveau dans *Le Bonheur* qui réitère la plupart des idées déjà exprimées dans *Les Destins*. Sa pensée rappelle celle de Goethe qui aurait pu lui servir de guide. On ne peut trouver ce bonheur dans les satisfactions du corps et des sens. On ne l'atteint pas par des plaisirs intellectuels ; on doit le chercher plutôt dans l'abnégation de soi, dans des sacrifices, dans la soumission aux lois naturelles qui régissent l'univers. Ainsi, *Le Bonheur* résume-t-il toute la philosophie de notre poète.

Sully-Prudhomme n'accepte pas sans réserve la doctrine de l'art pour l'art. On doit mettre l'art au service d'une idée. Il soutient que la poésie doit exprimer la vérité avant tout. Il rêvait d'une alliance entre la poésie et la science. Mais, ces deux choses ne seraient-elles pas peut-être incompatibles ? La poésie représente l'intuition, les émotions et les images ; la science représente les abstractions, la logique et les faits . . . On ne met pas en vers un problème de mathématiques ; on ne peut

<sup>45</sup>

O maître, tour à tour si tendre et si robuste,  
Rassure, aide, et défends par ton grand souvenir  
Quiconque sur sa tombe ose rêver d'unir  
Le laurier du poète à la palme du juste.

exprimer l'amour par une formule. Pourtant, comme on le voit dans *La Bouteille à la Mer*, de Vigny, ou dans *Le Zénith* de Sully-Prudhomme, la science peut inspirer un poème. En effet, il existe quelque chose qu'on pourrait appeler un alliance entre la poésie et la science.

Sully-Prudhomme est un poète élégiaque et sentimental. S'il n'est pas au premier rang, il est toutefois parmi les poètes les plus importants de son siècle. En outre, dans la période de sa plus grande influence (1870-1885), il exprime parfaitement l'esprit de son temps. Il a eu ses imitateurs que ne sont pas pour la plupart, très éminents,—Lemaître et Bourget sont les plus célèbres. Baudelaire, Verlaine et Mallarmé ont exercé une influence plus grande que la sienne sur les dernières années du siècle. Cependant, la comtesse de Noailles a avoué que "sa poésie sentimentale et intellectuelle a charmé mon adolescence." Il a eu, et il aura toujours, de fidèles admirateurs. C'est à ceux-ci qu'il s'adresse dans le *Dédicace des Vaines Tendresses*:

*Aux Amis Inconnus.*

Ces vers, je les dédie aux amis inconnus,  
A vous, les étrangers en qui je sens des proches,  
Rivaux de ceux qui j'aime et qui m'aiment le plus,  
Frères envers qui seuls mon coeur est sans reproches  
Et dont les coeurs au mien sont librement venus.

\* \* \* \* \*

Chers passants, ne prenez de moi-même qu'un peu,  
Le peu qui vous a plu parce qu'il vous ressemble;  
Mais de nous rencontrer ne formons point le vœu:  
Le vrai de l'amitié, c'est de sentir ensemble;  
Le reste en est fragile, épargnons-nous l'adieu.

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\*Le poète lui-même m'a fourni la plus grande partie de la matière de cette analyse. Je dois beaucoup à l'étude consciencieuse et pénétrante d'Edmond Estève (E. Estève: *Sully-Prudhomme, poète sentimentale et poète philosophe*, Paris, 1925), à celle d'Ernest Zyromski (E. Zyromski: *Sully-Prudhomme*, Paris, 1907), et, à celle de G. Paris (*Penseurs et Poètes*, Paris, 1896). Et je suis redevable aussi à mon ami et collègue, M. Paul Périgord, de ses bons conseils et de sa judicieuse critique.

## SYNALOEPHA WITH THREE VOWELS

SYNALOEPHA WITH three vowels, or triphthongal synaloepha, may be divided naturally into three groups, viz:

1. Synaloepha with three words.

De extremo\_a\_extremo tu amor (Calderón)

2. Synaloepha with two words, a diphthong in the first word.

Que es infamia\_estar aquí (Lope)

3. Synaloepha with two words, a diphthong in the second word.

La misma\_aurora oriental (Lope)

This division, however, must be subdivided in order to show all the possibilities of triphthongal synaloepha. The element of stress must be considered. So we shall adopt the following division:

1. Where none of the three vowels is stressed (cf. No. 1 above).

2. Where the stress falls on the first member of the synaloepha.

Que sea\_entidad separable (Lobo)

3. Where the stress falls on the second member of the synaloepha.

No: era airada piedad me\_ha\_embotado el denuesto (Marquina)

4. Where the stress falls on the third member of the synaloepha.

Esta noche\_a\_una señora (Alarcón)

5. Where two members of the synaloepha are stresses.

Pues, ¿qué\_ha\_alcanzado de vos (Alarcón)

What, then, are the possibilities of three vowel synaloepha in Spanish? Taking all the possible combinations of the five vowels, there are one hundred twenty-five. Naturally, all of these combinations do not form what are called "natural triphthongs." But, if none of the

triphthongal elements is stressed, there are eighty-one legitimate possibilities for triphthongs. This is true in spite of the fact that it is generally stated<sup>1</sup> that there are only four triphthongs in Spanish, viz: *íai*, *iei*, *uái*, and *uei*. The following groups are also sometimes given as triphthongs: *uea*, *ueo*, *iao*, and *iau*. But even so, this is far from the eighty-one cases which I shall try to show to be possible.

We may divide the vowels into groups, strong, (a, e, o) and weak (i, u). There are two classes of triphthongs resulting; one with a strong vowel in the center and the other with a weak vowel in the center. But as a general rule we state that three vowel synalopha is possible only when a strong vowel is the middle element. The few exceptions to this generalization will be noted in passing.

Y tierna y melancólica_a_andar vuelves	(Quintana)
Y así, aunque estaba_a_escuras como ciego	(Boscán)
No me basta_a_horadar	(Marquina)
A tu incierto favor, fortuna_a_airada	(Lobo)
Recibe en su casa_a_un hombre	(L. Moratín)
Si ello viene_a_averiguarse	(Lope)
Que aprenda un hombre_a_empedrar	(id.)
Tú que_a_orador de oradores	(Isla)
Que_a_hincados, se te consagran	(Meléndez)
¿Pues de qué le sirve_a_un hombre	(R. de la Cruz)
Y dijo al oído_a_Eneas	(Iriarte)
Tú solo_a_Oromedonte	(Herrera)
Como_a_interesada en él	(Bances Candamo)
Como_a_un alto personaje	(Iriarte)
¿Qué es lo que quieres que en Valencia_a_guarde	(Lope)
Servir de fregatriz si_a_Holanda fuera	(Samaniego)
Si_a_Hipólito en el mar fiero	(Lope)
Ni algún carbón de enebro en fragua_a_ardiente	(Chaide)
Y a la yegua_el fuerte moro	(N. Moratín)
La vil lengua_os cortaré	(Gutiérrez)
Castaños, Moyua_a_intrépidos perecen	(Quintana)
A tu_ausente pecho y alma	(Lope)

aoa—the combination presumably does not exist because of the physiological impossibility of pronouncing these three vowels in the time of one syllable.

aoo—does not exist apparently.

aoe—no examples found; a very rare combination.

Que la\_origáis de sobremesa

(Zorrilla)

<sup>1</sup>Benot, p. 439.

aou—no examples found.

Que sobre el empiéreo\_ardían

(Feijoo)

Por el hercúleo\_estrecho

(León)

coo—no examples found.

El ruido que se\_oiria en el saqueo

(Campoamor)

cou—no examples found.

ooa—no examples found.

Estío acabe en fuego,\_o\_en tanta nieve

(Herrera)

ooo—no examples found.

No\_oirás de su voz divina

(Campoamor)

oou—no examples found.

Y para más despacio\_atormentarse

(Garcilaso)

Dilo.

Guarda.

Necio\_estás

(Lope)

Cantó la pulga Ovidio,\_honor romano

(Quevedo)

Ni\_oiré tan viles palabras

(Lope)

Si en esto para el ocio\_y los regalos

(Samaniego)

Oh dulce prenda, testimonio\_un día

(Lobo)

Y el mutuo\_amor en sus miradas arde

(Quintana)

El monstruo\_horrible que a la patria oprime

(Quintana)

Y se agradan de un fauto\_en las locuras

(id.)

Perpetuo\_imán de mi vida

(Zorrilla)

De nuevo, y a su estado antiguo\_unirse

(Cervantes)

aea—this group is not possible in the time of one syllable.

aeo—the same observation applies to this group.

aee—no examples found.

Hermosa\_e\_infame cual mujer ninguna

(Lope)

Such synaloepha is very rare; the copula *e* should never be joined to both the preceding and the following vowels.

Tienen fama en toda\_Europa

(Lope)

Yo me\_he\_animado a daros un marido

(Lope)

No, no, que yo me\_he\_empeñado

(R. de la Cruz)

Es si es cierto lo que\_he\_oído

(Tirso)

eei—no examples found.

Huyendo a un padre\_Eufrosina

(Tirso)

Y esforzándose el héroe\_a levantarse

(Espronceda)

Y en ti no\_he\_encontrado olores

(Zorrilla)

oeo—no examples found.

Y, bajo\_e\_infame, proclamé su triunfo

(id.)

The same objection holds here as in the group *aei*.

Sabio Tales . . .

Docto\_Euclides

(Calderón)

A la ciudad?

Nadie\_amó

(Lope)

Y por eso a nadie\_espanta

(id.)

Y a la intemperie\_olvidada

(Zorrilla)

Un lance que nadie\_ignora

(Echegaray)

Renuncie\_usted a ese duelo

(id.)

Y averigüe\_el\_secreto de su crimen

(Isla)

ueo—no examples found.

uei—no examples found.

ueu—no examples found.

For physiological reasons, only eight of the twenty-five possible combinations, with *i* as the middle vowel, can be used to form synaloepha, and then very rarely and with great difficulty. I have been able to find only one example of this type, and that one in a dialect.

anday,\_y mi branco ganado

(L. de Rueda)

The other groups are: oii, eii, uia, uio, uie, uii, and uiu.

Still more infrequent are the synaloephas with the vowel *u* in the center. Out of the twenty-five possibilities, only five are at all to be considered: auí, eui, oui, iui, and uui. Only one example has come to my attention.

Aunque le quiero yo ¿le\_huirás? ni aquesto

(Quintana)

Three vowel synaloephas with the first vowel stressed.

Que yo, si puedo, volveré\_a\_informarte

(Calderón)

Que sea\_entidad separable

(Lobo)

Cuando muera, iré\_a\_abrasarme

(Marquina)

Esperara yo\_a\_un novillo

(Moreto)

Volar vi_a_uun cefirillo	(Meléndez)
Y va_a_empezarse a vestir	(N. Moratin)
¿Por qué_a_un cristiano te inclinas	(id.)
Paró, pues paró_a_hacer (7 syllable verse)	(Candamo)
Aquí le enseñé_a Italia el vino y pan	(id.)
Mi vida os llegó_a_ofrecer	(id.)

Me echa cien nudos.

Ea_apriesa	(R. de la Cruz)
Vuestro talle da_a_entender	(Lope)
Huyó_Eugenia, y yo he tenido	(id.)
Será_ausentarle de aquí	(id.)

Synaloephas with the stress on the second vowel of the triphthong.

Todo lo_he_encontrado en ella	(Quintana)
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Mataréte.

—¡ Ay Dios, qué susto!	(Lope)
¡Qué de golpe se_ha_asentado!	(id.)
Que a fe que aprendió_en_Madrid	(id.)
Título con que se_ha_alzado	(N. Moratin)
Que_ha_importado a su atención	(Moreto)
Si alguno se_ha_esmerado	(Iriarte)
Todo su encono_ha_estado	(Isla)
En ti solo me_he_agrandado	(San Juan de la Cruz)
El corazón le_ha_entregado	(Sta. Teresa)
Y_ha_os ganado con su muerte	(id.)
Se me_ha_entrado por el pie	(Valdivielso)
Viendo que al mundo_ha_espantado	(id.)

Synaloephas with the stress on the last vowel of the triphthong.

Y en su porvenir, Y_ahí tienes	(Echegaray)
Que_a_Ése que va caminando	(Valdivielso)
Que contenta_a_este Zagal	(Sta. Teresa)
Como_a_otros, el destino	(Jovellanos)
Ni_a_uno ni_a_otro espantajo	(id.)
Al ímpetu del viento,_a_estos injustos	(Herrera)
Triste que_a_ella parecés	(id.)
Cerca al Danubio,_una isla, que pudiera	(Garcilaso)
Es su libra el horror de_ahora	(Isla)
Lo han detenido, y_a_estos	(id.)
Y_a_este fin los convoca	(Iriarte)
Dijo_a_una mona: ¿Qué tal?	(id.)
Un breve caso_a_este intento	(id.)
Ríndese un hombre_a_este encanto	(id.)
Que asomada_a_una ventana	(id.)
Dióte la industria_este necio	(Lope)
Miradme, infame, bárbaro,_a_esta cara	(id.)
Pide al trocarse_a_una fuente	(id.)

Triphthongs with two vowels stressed.

Mozo, ¿dónde habrá_ahora misa?	(Moreto)
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Pues ¿qué_ha_alcanzado de vos	(Alarcón)
Tal llaga me_ha_hecho amor	(Boscán)
¡Campos en que una, antes, amó_a_otro, pinos tristes	(Jiménez)
Desta encantada torre.	
Yo_aun no tengo	(Calderón)

After considering these examples carefully, there is only one conclusion to draw, and that is that three vowel synaloepha is common only when a strong or dominant vowel occupies the center position of the triphthong. These vowels are *a*, *e* and *o*. When the weak vowels, *i* and *u*, are in the center, synaloepha, while not absolutely impossible, is very infrequent and always harsh. The main reason for this is, as has been stated before, physiological. It applies to the case whether the middle vowel be strong or weak. The impossibility, in the group *aoa*, of making the physiological movements which the opening of the mouth requires and the placing of the other organs of speech in their proper position for pronouncing the *a*, then of closing them to pronounce the *o*, and lastly, of opening them again for the second *a*, is evident. Especially so, when it is recalled that this must be done in the time it takes to pronounce one syllable, and still sound all the vowels.

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## ABBREVIATIONS:

*B. A. E.*—*Biblioteca de autores españoles*.

*C. C.*—*Clásicos castellanos*.

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## THE GERMANIC LIBRARIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT LOS ANGELES

THE SHORT SPAN of the last twelve years has been for the University of California at Los Angeles Library a period of particular significance. Not only have the general accessions increased from 100,000 to 340,000 volumes, representing an annual gain of about 20,000 volumes, but this remarkable growth was even more significant for the type and quality of books acquired than the mere imposing numerical expansion.

Due to the active interest with which the Germanic Department has guided the acquisition of books of importance to them, the University of California at Los Angeles has now achieved a place of pre-eminence among American libraries.

In addition to the annual purchases of carefully chosen books from the strictly limited annual budget, the Library was particularly fortunate in acquiring, in the field of Germanics, six private libraries of eminent European scholars.

The advantage for a University library in acquiring such libraries is evident when we consider the fact that each of these scholarly collections represents the rich harvest of a lifetime's effort to assemble with extreme care and skill most of the important works within the compass of the scholar's interest. Such libraries always contain numerous rare and semi-rare books not obtainable through other channels. Here also come to light many volumes long out of print, which would often require years of search in the second-hand market at prices frequently beyond the institution's reach. The scholars, whose book collections we have acquired, were in most cases also bibliographers. They built up their libraries when fundamental works could still be purchased, and had the connections of a sort certain to bring valuable books and pamphlets to them. A good number of these scholar's books are carefully annotated with their own marginal, critical notes and corrections, lending additional importance to the works.

The foundation for this remarkable Germanic library was laid in 1928, when the well-known philanthropist, the late William Kerckhoff, presented the University of California at Los Angeles with the distinguished Friedrich Kluge library. This collection consists of about

5,000 bound volumes and several thousand unbound dissertations and pamphlets. It includes 500 volumes of scholarly works on Germanic dialects, 100 volumes on student jargon, 150 volumes on secret languages and secret societies and 400 volumes of dictionaries, perhaps all the dictionaries Kluge consulted in the compilation of his well-known *Ety-mologisches Wörterbuch* (1st ed. 1883, 11th ed., 1934).

In the Kluge collection are also 150 volumes on folklore, 500 volumes on English linguistic history, 20 volumes on the Finnish language and 40 complete series of leading philological journals, as well as many publications of learned societies. Kluge, who succeeded Hermann Paul at the University of Freiburg i. Br., wrote during his 46 years as a scholar 30 books and over 140 authoritative articles in the field of Germanics.

In 1929 the library purchased a collection of German books which had been assembled by the defunct International Academy of Philosophy. It contains about 11,000 bound volumes and 2,000 unbound dissertations and pamphlets in the field of modern German literature, philosophy, and art. The pamphlets are largely devoted to the Young German movement between 1918-1928. This collection offers also fine examples of modern book making.

Several years ago, the Germanic Department added Swedish, and, later Danish and Norwegian to its curriculum. This, in turn, stimulated and intensified the acquisition of books in the field of Scandinavian languages. In direct response to it the library of the famous Swedish scholar, Axel Kock, was purchased in 1936. He was for many years editor of the leading Swedish philological journal, *Arkiv för Nordisk Filologie*, and a member of several philological societies. The Kock Library consists of 3,000 items, dealing with phonetics, runes, and sagas, which supplement the material contained in the Kluge collection.

Two years later, 1938, the famous libraries of Professor Konrad Burdach and Professor Otto Bremer were offered to the University. These two collections were of such magnitude and importance that it was necessary to share their acquisition with the University Library at Berkeley. The Burdach collection totals approximately 22,000 volumes and pamphlets, Bremer's about 6,000 of which the University of California at Los Angeles received about one-third of the first, and one-half of the second library. Professor Burdach, the late celebrated Renaissance scholar at the universities of Leipzig, Königsberg, Bonn, and Berlin, and later a permanent member of the Prussian academy of science, collected works dealing with the period of the late middle ages

up to 1600. His library also includes valuable books of the 18th and 19th centuries. Among them are first editions of the Romantic writers, such as Tieck, Wackenroder, and Eichendorff. Noteworthy are also his early and first editions of Goethe, and the early prose works of Burdach's most admired poet, Richard<sup>1</sup> Wagner. Moreover, this library includes a sprinkling of editions of classical authors, and a fair representation of Italian literature and criticism.

Professor Otto Bremer, of the University of Halle, specialized in ethnology, phonetics and Germanic dialects. His private library of about 6,000 volumes enriches materially the holdings of important basic research material within this scope.

The most recent purchase of Germanic works was the collection of the Danish scholar Verner Dahlerup, in 1939. Fortunately, the shipment was dispatched from Europe a few weeks prior to the beginning of the present war. The 4,000 titles of the Dahlerup library, which was also purchased jointly with Berkeley, contain unique material in Scandinavian philology and literature, especially in the old Danish and old Icelandic. Dahlerup's scholarly achievements speak eloquently of his qualifications as a book collector. He was assistant librarian at the Danish Royal Library between 1887 and 1899. A few years later, he became professor of Danish language at the University of Copenhagen. Dahlerup was the founder and up to his death, the editor of the most extensive Danish dictionary, *Ordbog over det Danske sprog*, now in its 18th volume. This scholar has trained the entire present generation of Danish lexicographers.

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## ACQUIRING LANGUAGE IN AND THROUGH CULTURAL CONTENT

### *A Unit on Spanish-American Geography for the First Week of Beginning Spanish*

The assumption in conventional language courses has been that after the mechanics of the language were mastered attention would be given to the appreciation of foreign cultures. Usually this was done through the medium of English as an incidental part of the foreign language course. Such assumptions ignore the fact that comparatively few students of language survive the drill period, and consequently whatever knowledge a student gains in this direction is largely incidental and more in the nature of a by-product than of a significant outcome. Anyone who has taught foreign languages to young people knows that nothing that is left to incidental instruction can ever be taken for granted as a significant outcome—rarely even as an incidental by-product. The trend in modern foreign language teaching is to have the student come into contact with the culture of the country, primarily through the medium of the foreign tongue, while he is developing skill in the use of the language, not, as has formerly been the case, after he has “covered the grammar.” In other words, the pupil is to sharpen his linguistic tools on content worth communicating from the standpoint of the thought, ideas or information expressed—cultural material, it may be, of a type calculated to introduce him to the foreign country and its peoples in relation to our own national life and to the world progress in the arts and sciences.<sup>1</sup> Thus culture and language are integrated, one reinforces the other, neither is sacrificed, and the sum total of the outcomes is greater not only in terms of ability in language and information but also in terms of student interest. The conviction is strong that languages should be learned *from the start in and through cultural contact*—through material and exercises that have some significance in terms of the information and ideas contained apart from the mere facts of language itself.

The accompanying unit is a minor sample of the cultural approach which is beginning to take root in the modern foreign language teach-

<sup>1</sup>Syllabus in Modern Foreign Languages, *Bulletin of High Points* (Board of Education, New York City, September, 1935), Vol. XVII, No. 7, pp. 5-31; *An Experience Curriculum in English*, edited by W. Wilbur Hatfield (D. Appleton-Century Company, 1935), pp. 133-135.

ing in the United States. In the past little has been done in this direction by teachers of foreign languages because of the almost complete absence of material specifically designed for the beginning stages of a language. The unit below is intended for use in the first week of beginning Spanish. It is based on the geography of South America in keeping with the resolution unanimously approved by the American Association of Teachers of Spanish in 1935 which recommends a greater emphasis upon Spanish-American culture, preferably at levels of schooling where it will reach the maximum number of students. Properly used, the exercise should serve the following purposes:

1. It should afford beginning students the satisfaction of using language in meaningful content from the very start, and should thus appeal to interest as a factor in learning.

2. It should supply motivated practice material for exercises in pronunciation in the earliest stages of beginning work.

3. It should afford practice in vocabulary-building in practical context, and thus appeal to the interest of considerable numbers of students in unselected classes whose objectives are neither exclusively literary nor college preparatory.

4. It should enable the novice to become acquainted informally with several types of word-order, and thus to secure a general overview of the basic pattern of the language preparatory to the specialized treatment of specific problems.

5. It should capitalize the charade or puzzle interest in the service of language study.

6. It should develop a certain measure of *Sprachgefühl*.

Although the exercise can be used in a variety of ways, the procedure has proven most satisfactory with average beginning classes as follows:

1. Discussion with the students concerning the nature and purpose of the exercise.

2. Oral repetition of the exercises by the class in concert and by individual students in emulation of the instructor. Establishment of bonds of association through the comparison of foreign words with near-cognates and related terms in the vernacular.

3. Oral sight work capitalizing the work of volunteers.



4. Independent work by the pupils during the supervised study period on the exercises of Part I and II as specified in the written directions to students.

5. Oral review and discussion of Parts I and II, perhaps with the correction and exchange of papers during the following recitation period.

6. Review test on exercises of Parts I, II, and III.

7. Games and informal review activities for the development of a more thorough command of the material.

In classes of the Stanford Language Arts Investigation in which the material has been tried out, the pupils' responses were sufficiently satisfactory to justify the conviction that, properly used, the exercise will have similar interest for other students and teachers of Spanish.

## PARTE I

Each number on the outline map No. 1, and in the Spanish exercises below, stands for the name of a country or city in South America. Countries are numbered I, II, III, etc., and cities 1, 2, 3, etc. To find the names for which the numbers stand, first locate the number on the *outline map* No. 1 and then find the name on a large wall map of South America or on the map in your own textbook.

## EJERCICIOS

### *Direcciones:*

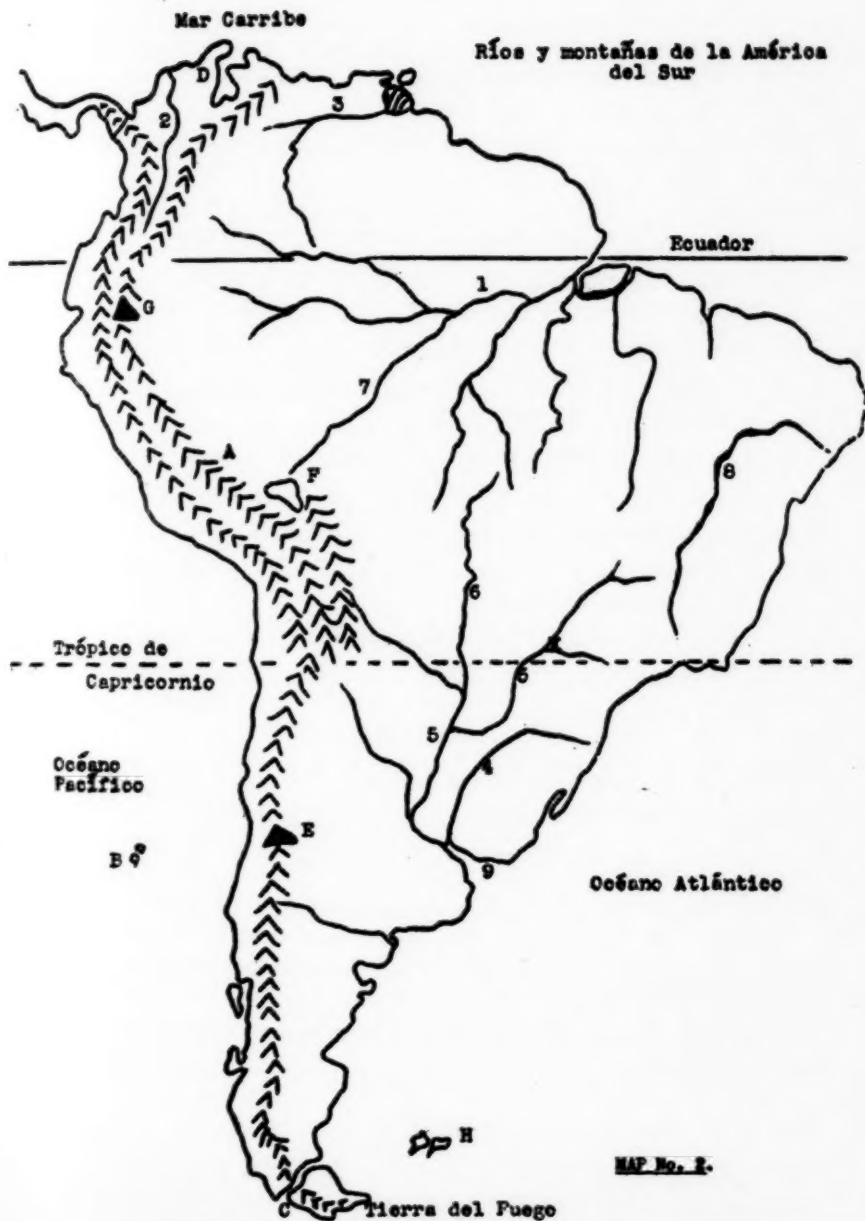
Letter a separate sheet of paper in a column (a, b, c, etc.) and opposite the proper letters, write in the *name* of the city or country that corresponds to the number in the exercise and on the outline map No. 1. For example:

*Given:* a. La ciudad de la Argentina que produce much vino es 17.

*Write:* a. *Mendoza.*

### *A. Ciudades*

- a. La capital del Brasil es 5.
- b. La ciudad más importante de la Argentina es 1.
- c. La ciudad más importante del Uruguay es 3.
- d. La capital del Perú es 41.
- e. Una ciudad en el centro de Chile es 16.
- f. El puerto (port) del Ecuador es 12.
- g. El centro de comercio en Columbia es 10.
- h. El centro industrial de Venezuela (situado en la costa del Mar Carribe es 7.
- i. 19, la capital de Bolivia, es la capital más alta (highest) del mundo (globo).
- j. 20 es la capital y la ciudad más importante, del Paraguay.



### B. Países (naciones)

In each exercise below, the name of a country is *in italics*. Find the country on a large wall map, or on the map in your textbook, and then find its number (I, II, III, etc.) on the outline map No. 2. Write this number on a separate sheet of paper, opposite the letters that correspond to the exercises. For example:

**Given:** a. El país mas grande de la American del Sur es el *Brasil*.

**Write:** a. IV.

- a. El único (only) país (republica) de Sud América que no tiene (has) ningún puerto (port) es *Bolivia*.
- b. Los gauchos (cowboys) se hallan (are found) en las pampas (plains) de la *Argentina*.
- c. *Colombia* y el *Brasil* cultivan mucho café.
- d. *Chile* tiene muchos minerales como el nitro (nitrate), el cobre (copper), el carbon (coal), y el hierro (iron).
- e. En el *Paraguay*, la gente (people) bebe (drink) mucho mate (tea).
- f. Andrés Bello, el gran poeta de Sud América, nació (was born) en *Venezuela*.
- g. Se hallan muchas esmeraldas (emeralds) en *Colombia*.
- h. El cacao, del cual (from which) se hace (se produce) el chocolate, se cultiva (is grown) en el *Ecuador*.
- i. El *Uruguay* es la república más pequeña (smallest) de Sud America.
- j. El *Brasil* produce muchos diamantes.

### C. Geografía histórica

Follow the directions for the group B above.

- a. La batalla de Maipú ganó (won) la independencia para *Chile*.
- b. *Colombia* ganó su independencia por medio de (by means of) la batalla de Boyacá.
- c. La batalla de Ayacucho, la última (last) batalla de independencia de la América del Sur, se luchó (was fought) en el *Perú*.
- d. Simón Bolívar, uno de los héroes de la independencia de Sud América, nació (was born) en *Venezuela*.
- e. El general San Martín, otro héroe de la independencia de la América del Sur, nació en la *Argentina*.

## PARTE II

Each number on the map No. 2, and in the Spanish sentences below, stands for the name of a river in South America. In group B, the letters A, B, C, etc., stand for the names of mountains, lakes, or straits. To find the names, first locate the number or letter on the outline map No. 2, and then find the name on a large wall map of South America, or on the map in your textbook.

*A. Los Ríos**Direcciones:*

Letter a separate sheet of paper in a column (a, b, c, etc.) and opposite the proper letters write the names of the rivers, mountains or lakes that correspond to the numbers or letters on the outline map. For example:

*Given:* a. Buenos Aires, la capital de la Argentina, está situada en el 9.

*Write:* a. Río de la Plata.

- a. El río más grande del mundo (globo) es el 1.
- b. La frontera entre la Argentina y el Uruguay es el 4.
- c. Un río importante de la Argentina es el 5.
- d. Un tributario importante del Río de la Plata es el 6.
- e. El Río de la Plata se forma (is formed) por la union de 4, 5, y 6.
- f. El río más importante de Colombia es el 2.
- g. El río más importante de Venezuela es el 3.
- h. El río que corre (flows) enteramente en el Brasil es el 8.
- i. Un afluente (tributario) importante del Río Amazonas es el 7.
- j. Pará, un puerto importante del Brasil, está situado en la embocadura (mouth) del 1.

*B. Montañas, Lagos, y Estrechos*

Follow the directions for group A above.

- a. La cordillera (range) de montañas en la costa occidental (west) de Sud América se llama (is called) los A.
- b. La montaña más alta (highest) de Sud América es E.
- c. Otra (another) montaña muy (very) alta, situada en el Ecuador, es G.
- d. El lago más grande y más importante de Sud América, entre Bolivia y el Perú es el F.
- e. Las "Niagara Falls" de Sud América son las X del río Iguazú, afluente (tributario) del río Paraná entre la Argentina y el Brasil.
- f. Los A forman la frontera entre Chile y la Argentina.
- g. La isla (island) de Tierra del Fuego está separada del resto de Sud América por (by) el C.
- h. Las islas en donde vivieron (lived) Robinson Crusoe y su hombre Friday son las islas de B.
- i. Las islas de H, cerca de (near) la costa de la Argentina, pertenecen a (belong to) los ingleses (English).
- j. El lago de D en Venezuela no es un lago verdadero (real), sino (but) un pantano (swamp, marsh).

## PARTE III

*Resumen de Vocabulario*

Number a separate sheet of paper in a column, and opposite the proper numbers write the *Spanish* for the following words and expressions as given in the exercises of *Partes I and II* above.

A. See *Parte I-A*

1. *the* port
2. *a* city
3. *the* center
4. *the* capital
5. world

B. See *Parte I-B*

1. *the* only country
2. *the* cowboys-
3. grow much coffee
4. *the* people
5. copper
6. coal
7. iron
8. was born (*one* word)
9. many diamonds
10. *the* smallest republic  
(four words)

C. See *Parte I-C*

1. *the* battle
2. by means of
3. *the* last battle
4. was fought
5. one of the heroes

D. See *Parte II-A*

1. *the* rivers
2. *the* boundary (*frontier*)
3. *an* important river
4. is formed
5. *the* most important river
6. flows
7. is located

E. See *Parte II-B*

1. mountains
2. lakes
3. *the* west coast
4. is called
5. *the* island
6. belong to
7. is not a real lake
8. *the* range of mountains
9. *a* swamp
10. *the* English

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## REVIEWS

**THE FRENCH PREPOSITION.** By Marius Biencourt. The Scholastic Press, Los Angeles, 1939. 198 pp.

The correct use of prepositions in French, as in any other modern language, is certainly one of the hardest obstacles to be faced by the advanced student whose ambition is to speak or write the language as nearly as possible like a native; yet this reviewer knows of only two works on the subject: one in preparation, and this recently published book by Professor Biencourt. The present volume consists of two parts: an introductory study (pp.4-51) listing French prepositions and prepositional locutions alphabetically and discussing their various applications under sub-headings of the relationships they may express; and a reference dictionary (pp.53-198) listing a great number of words with the prepositions which may follow them, at least one example being given for each preposition used after every word. Both parts of the book bear witness to an erudite knowledge of the language: a great deal more, indeed, than any student is likely to need. The second part in particular, while containing much helpful material, also contains many things that are of more importance as curiosities than for their practical value. Among these are numerous expressions belonging exclusively to legal or nautical jargon (*ester en jugement, habilité, se ranger à quai, etc.*) terms of heraldry not always designated as such, phrases like "Il ennuie à qui attend," and words such as *équipoller, se rédimier, compéter, dédupé, s'époumoner, etc.*, which are used by few French people and which no American student would ever learn except by accident—and which he would not need if he did learn them, since there are commoner equivalents which would serve his purpose. There are also many phrases which seem to belong more properly in a book of idioms. Nobody would ever look up the word *bayer*, for instance, in order to see what preposition would follow it, since *bayer aux corneilles* is the only phrase in which this verb appears nowadays. This second part of the book also contains a few slangy expressions, again not always indicated as such (*s'égueuler, clouer le bec à quelqu'un, etc.*).

One will note in the book a certain amount of repetition, but this is hardly a fault, at least not for practical purposes. The same expressions sometimes occur both in the list of prepositional locutions and in the reference dictionary (*afin de, à l'insu de*); others, such as *à bout de*, are not found in the former, though they appear to have equal *droit de cité* there. *A l'instar de* is not mentioned at all. The preface states that superfluous illustrations are not given when the ordinary English equivalent for a preposition of place, such as *dans, sur, contre, etc.*, should have been obvious: it seems as if this principle might well have been extended, and that such examples as *appartenir à* and *heureusement pour lui*, for instance, do not meet any real difficulty. But a superfluity can at least do no harm.

On the other hand, there are omissions. Nobody knows better than this writer how hopeless it would be to attempt to list *every* case that might arise to puzzle the student, and Professor Biencourt would doubtless be the first to dis-

claim any such superhuman ambition. One will not find any example of *effort de* plus an infinitive, of *sauter sur* ("Il sauta sur ses pistolets" —Stendhal), or of the repetition of *de*, contrary to English practice, in such a sentence as "Vous avez parlé de lui comme d'un grand général." These are trifles, but other matters will be found that are more troublesome. In giving prepositions with the same word, the examples do not always make it clear whether the preposition can be used interchangeably or whether each example represents a different case. When the student sees "Il a marié sa fille à (or avec) un chevalier," he knows that either preposition may be used after *marié*. But under *merci* there are two separate examples: "Merci de la bonté ..." and "Merci pour la carte..."; may the student infer that *merci de* is incorrect with a concrete object like *carte*? Incidentally, in the only example with *remercier*, "Elle le remercia d'un sourire," we find *de* again, but with an entirely different meaning, a fact which may be far from obvious to the student. And is he to suppose that "Le malheur s'acharne après nous" and "Le malheur s'acharne sur nous" mean the same thing, or not?

The chief difficulty one will encounter is the fact that in the vast majority of cases no translations are given for the examples. Without them many of the sentences are bound to be unintelligible even for the advanced student. Quite aside from the legal, nautical, and heraldic examples, how many readers would make sense out of "une bielle articulée sur un maneton," "Elle boude contre son ventre," "Il assit la dot de sa fille sur un bien-fonds," "communier sous les deux espèces," or even "Il me chicane de ce que j'ai refusé" and "A qui le dites-vous?" Other examples tend to be actually misleading without translation: most students would be certain to misinterpret "Il s'acointa avec la jeune fille" or "Il en a pris acte contre moi."

Again, while the student will find copious illustrations of the preposition to be used *after* a vast number of words, he will find practically none, except accidentally, of the preposition required *before* a word. If he looks up *prétexte* he will see "C'est un prétexte pour me chasser," but nothing to show him that a translation of "Upon what pretext" calls for *sous* and not *sur*. He may want to know how to render "I was on the point of giving it to him," and he finds "Il en était au point de céder," which illustrates only the preposition after *point* the presence of *au* in the example is due to the use of the expression *en être à* and not to *point*, but the student will probably not realize this and will be less likely to use the correct form "sur le point de" in his own sentence than if he had not looked up the example. In some examples a preposition is listed as depending on the word it follows when it would seem more logically to depend on the word it precedes. For instance, "un demi pour cent" is given with *demi*, although *pour* would be used similarly after *six*, *vingt*, or any other number, and in "classer par ordre de mérite" the *par* seems to be required by the word *ordre* ("in order of merit") rather than by *classer*.

There is no doubt, however, that this book will render great service in a field where there is need of it.

The following typographical errors have been noted, with the pages where they occur:

Accents—24 freres, 53 absorbe, 64 assener, assena, 98 destinés, 100 entièrement, 116 côteaux, 120 reconcilier, 126 maniment, 130 misère, 131 frère,

140 extrême, 146 auprès, 150 La Bruyère, 151 marchèrent, 161 chèvres, chrétiens, persévère, 166 donnèrent, 168 procès, 175 rejouer, rejouissez, 183 fêtes, ouie, 189 façon, 190 auprès, 191 lumière. There is also the word *empiètement* on p. 114, but Mr. Biencourt's way of writing it is in conformity with present pronunciation, and might well be extended. We no longer write *siège* and *collège* with an acute accent, and there is no logical reason for so writing the word just mentioned, or the word *événement*—especially as the dictionaries give *avènement*.

Spellings—16 écriirai, 40 lea (*for lee*), 56 accompte, 59 témoignange, 65 astraints, 74 reste-il, 87 vielles, 95 déagréable, 99 deuill, 100 grante, 113 ad-  
versersaire, 116 fatigue, nieges, 123 pedre, 130 éches, 139 inconuu, 141 in (*for il*), 142 infestés (*for infestée*), 152 la vrai, 153 rein, 154 mondifications, 164 toute entière, 174 le réflexion, 182 sculpteur, 184 excercer, 190 auprès, ii (*for il*), 191 it (*for il*), 193 à la aiguille, 194 poie (*for joie*), songle (*for songe*).

Miscellaneous—115 The example for *encroûter* with *dans* has been omitted.

Should the example on p. 86 "Ce n'est pas à y croire" read "C'est à ne pas y croire?" The latter seems to be the usual form of the expression.

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*Oberon*. A Poetical Romance in Twelve Books. Translated from the German of Wieland (1799-1801) by John Quincy Adams. Edited with an Introduction and Notes by A. B. Faust. (F. S. Crofts and Co., New York, 1940, xcii+340pp. \$2.50.)

It is to the credit of the Oberlaender Trust of Philadelphia, which provided financial assistance, and of friends, former students and associates of Professor Faust, who obtained sufficient advance subscriptions for the projected work, that the supposedly lost manuscript of Adams' translation of Wieland's rococo epic is now made available. The insight and coopération of the publishers account in no small way for the substantial and inviting format of the volume.

The present work represents a two-fold addition to the body of our knowledge concerning German-American relations. It provides in the text the best and only complete metrical translation into English of *Oberon* and in the introductory sections new information on the impact of German literature upon a distinguished American statesman in an age when German culture played a relatively slight rôle in American letters. In this connection, as Faust points years before Madame de Staël's *De l'Allemagne*, which first made known to out, we must remember that Adams' translation was completed some fifteen the English and Americans some aspects of the hitherto closed realm of German literature. Finally the volume constitutes in a broad sense an added title to the editor's list of earlier researches in the German-American field, as evidenced by his *Charles Sealfield*, 1897, and his monumental *The German Element in the United States*, 1909, 2nd. ed. 1927.

The translation was made during Adams' residence in Berlin in the years 1797-1801 as Minister Plenipotentiary to Prussia. When one learns that the statesman first began the study of German in March, 1798, the excellence and

accuracy of his efforts seem all the more remarkable. While the existence of the manuscript has been assumed for almost a century, it remained for Professor Faust in a patient bit of literary detective work to find it among the papers of the Adams family in the Massachusetts Historical Society in Boston. Through the good offices of the family the editor was permitted to publish the results of his researches. He was able to uncover three practically complete versions of the work and a further fragment of the same. Here the fourth and last copy is reproduced. Since the only other verse translation into English, that of William Sotheby (London, 1798), presents an expurgated text, Adams' work has a contemporary as well as an antiquarian significance.

In content and form the edition is a model of careful and exact scholarship. A felicitously phrased introduction enlightens us on the place of German letters in Adams' life during his years in Berlin. Further chapters comment on the fidelity, orthography, and punctuation of the manuscript. In addition we learn aspects of the life and occupations of a personality associated with the boyhood of Heinrich von Kleist, namely Samuel Henri Catel, Adams' school teacher and his severest critic during the progress of the work on *Oberon*. Valuable extracts from unpublished diaries and letters of Adams relative to the translation and "Analytical Extracts" (plot summaries) complete the scientific apparatus.

The text itself offers a faithful and sprightly rendering of the original and displays an amusing "Sprachgefühl." Faust's notes to the text clarify possible difficulties and misunderstandings.

This reviewer has only one regret with regard to the present contribution. He confesses to an unsatisfied curiosity as to Adams' further interest in German literature in the years following his stay in Berlin. Perhaps Professor Faust will satisfy this curiosity in a subsequent publication.

In format, content, and spirit this volume constitutes a heartening and fitting climax to A. B. Faust's distinguished career in our discipline.

WILLIAM J. MULLOY

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*The Classical Ideal in German Literature, 1755-1805.* By R. Hinton Thomas. An Introduction and an Anthology. Bowes and Bowes, Cambridge, 1939. (XII + 126).

Every teacher of a course devoted to the study of German classicism must have felt a need for just such an anthology as this, one which supplements the student's reading of the classic literary works of Goethe and Schiller with brief but pregnant excerpts from their critical treatises and those of their contemporary critics and admirers. For in the urge to acquaint the student with the poetry, drama, essays and novels of these literary giants, theory must often be neglected, or at least receive scant attention in the form of random observations by the professor. It is, however, very important that the student become acquainted with the ideas which produced and directed the genesis of the classics and that this acquaintance be gained from the original texts rather than from purely secondary sources. I need not mention the difficulties for

the student if he is expected to comb through the works of Kant, Winckelmann, Herder, Friedrich August Wolff, Lessing, Wieland, Karl von Humboldt, etc. in an attempt to find the ideas which fructified the works of German classicism. This small inexpensive (five shillings) volume makes arduous search on the part of the student for adequate expressions of the classical ideal in its many facets unnecessary, at least so long as such study is still in the introductory stage.

This book is more than a collection of brief selections from the criticism of what we loosely call the period of German classicism. An historical survey of German literature from the Thirty Years' War to the end of classicism entitled "The Background of German Classicism" prepares the reader for a study of the passages themselves. Furthermore, the excerpts are arranged according to eight divisions, each representative of some component part in the classical ideal. To these chapters two appendices are added. The first offers some source material regarding the Christian romanticists' reaction to the pagan implications of German classicism, particularly Schiller's *Die Götter Griechenlands* and the objections to it raised by Friederich Leopold zu Stolberg, Franz von Kleist and Novalis. Appendix II offers a chronological survey and the dates of the authors mentioned in the book.

The introductory chapter, "The Background of German Classicism," reviews the course of German literature from humanism to the beginnings of romanticism in the short space of 21 pages. Naturally, such extreme brevity has led to some over-simplification. However, it is an open question whether such generalizations may not make the book of greater practical aid to the student who is making a first acquaintance with German classicism. To a certain degree Thomas looks upon German classicism as a belated flowering of the Renaissance in Germany, a flower which has been prevented from blooming at its normal time by the outbreak of the Thirty Years' War and the religious upheavals of the Reformation.

The treatment of the rôles played by the *Aufklärung* and *Sturm und Drang* as predecessors of classicism is less open to question. The insistence of the former movement that literature express the new optimism and the moral precepts of the time in conformance with the fundamental and rationalistic laws of form, was balanced by the latter movement's wild protest against the restraining bonds of society and art. The static art of the Age of Enlightenment was superseded by the organic art of Storm and Stress. From the former, Classicism inherited a feeling for form; from the latter it derived the conviction that form must grow out of the inner nature of the work of art itself. From each of these antithetical movements classicism derived concepts which were fused into the ideal of *Totalität*.

Thomas calls upon Goethe's *Literarischer Sansculottismus* to explain some of the differences between French and German classicism. Using Goethe's own conditions for the emergence of classicism in a country, the author points out that these were satisfactorily present in the case of French classicism and only partly so in the case of German classicism. The latter could not represent and grow out of a truly national culture and could not claim as vital a connection with the ideals of the middle class. In fact, German classicism felt a disdain for all but a small percentage of that class.

In addition to excerpts from the theoretical writings of the men mentioned previously, Karl Philipp Moritz, Christian Gottfried Körner, Hölderlin, Friedrich der Grosse, Friedrich Schlegel and Shaftesbury are each represented by short extracts. No quarrel may be found with the selection or classification of the material unless it be the omission of the important definitive paragraphs from *Laokoon* in the chapter devoted to the contributions of this work to the formation of the classical ideal.

The volume is well documented and the notes and references seem generally thorough. However, in the note on *Haupt- und Staatsaktionen* (p.9) it seems to me that the author might have mentioned one very important characteristic of those productions: namely, that they were ordinarily extemporaneous performances. The actors made up their lines as they went, following only a brief outline of the plot tacked to the wings of the stage.

Mechanical errors are very scarce. I noticed only one misprint: omission of the umlaut on *Schönen*, p. 54, line 1. The final two words, page 94, line 2, should be spaced. It seems evident to me that the author in speaking of the "Apolline view of Greece" and its "complimentary Dionysiac element" (p. 42, line 5) actually means *complementary*.

Because this introduction and anthology represents a real pedagogical need, and because its price is bound to be low even after its importation, it should have a wide sale in the colleges of this country.

VERN W. ROBINSON

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## TEXT BOOKS

### FRENCH

*L'Abbé Constantin.* By Ludovic Halevy. Adapted and edited with notes, exercises, and vocabulary by Belle E. Bickford and Algernon Coleman. (D. C. Heath and Company.)

Although the characters are a little too noble and the plot is somewhat too fantastic, *L'Abbé Constantin* should prove interesting and worth-while reading matter for second year students of French. Ludovic Halevy's story of the good old priest and his godson will probably not be taken very seriously, but should keep the student entertained as he learns.

The vocabulary has been established with care and accuracy, an attempt being made to eliminate the words less frequently used in the common, everyday language. In addition to modifying the vocabulary, the editors have provided a set of exercises which emphasizes the relationships between words in English and in French, and another set of exercises which provides practice in recognizing the most frequently used forms of the commonest irregular verbs.

The notes provide an ample commentary on the numerous references and allusions contained in the text. Written in French within the vocabulary limits of the text, these notes deal with the geography, history, institutions, and customs of France. As a special feature of the book, the notes that are intended to clarify or explain the language and grammar of the text are placed at the foot of the page. This system of footnotes is especially well adapted to the average student, who finds it difficult and inconvenient to refer constantly to the notes at the back of the book.

The method of including in parentheses the infinitive form of the irregular verbs used, is likewise to be commended. This direct review of verb forms is an effective aid in developing fluency and rapid reading habits.

Because this book combines a reader, grammar review, and cultural study of France all in one, the average student will find it very much to his liking. As the editors themselves express it, this text is dedicated "to those teachers who set themselves the goal of training their students to read French with moderate ease and with enjoyment."

SOPHIE GERSH

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*Ferragus.* By Balzac. Edited with Introduction, Notes and Vocabulary by Walter Scott Hastings and Jared Wenger. (D. C. Heath and Company, 1940.)

The works of Balzac, because of the scientific complexity of the author's style and manner of presentation are as a rule difficult to incorporate into a school text. The story of *Ferragus* however, has been handled rather well in this school edition by Hastings and Wenger. There have been numerous cuts in the text without destroying its continuity and general readability.

As for the story itself, it is enough of a romantic mystery to hold the interests of the pupils and is offered, as Hastings and Wenger express it, "primarily as an example of good story telling." Moreover, as one of the series of *Scènes de la Vie Parisienne*, *Ferragus* is a work very characteristic of this phase of the author's talent. It shows his profound knowledge and understanding of Parisian life with the hypocrisy and the tragedy behind the apparent gayety of its "beau monde."

On the whole, the text would be quite satisfactory for rather elementary classes as any difficulties that they might experience with the vocabulary or idiomatic expressions are clarified either in the vocabulary or in the notes found at the bottom of each page. These are quite extensive and explain not only colloquialisms and idioms used by Balzac, but they also clarify his many geographical references, names of streets, sections of the city, etc. This is further accomplished by means of illustrations and several maps on the "Paris of Ferragus, 1819." The notes are also valuable as a means of aiding the student to read intelligently and critically. They point out various examples of the typical Balzacian philosophy or style which the average inexperienced student would not notice. There are also several suggestions to compare a certain treatment by Balzac with that by some other author who has written about a similar subject, or with that in another of Balzac's own books. As an example of the latter is the comparison of the graveyard scene in the closing pages of this story with that at the end of *Le Père Goriot*.

These notes, together with a fine introduction, give a rather complete picture of the aims of Balzac in writing his *Comédie Humaine*. The introduction in addition to a brief biography of the author, discusses the plan and form of the *Comédie Humaine* and its underlying theory which Balzac received from the natural scientist, Geoffroi Saint-Hilaire. Following this the Parisian fragment of the *Comédie Humaine* is discussed at more length, giving a clearer insight into the underworld of Paris in the early nineteenth century with its secret societies which reached their peak during the Restoration. One of these is the sinister brotherhood of thirteen members, "pledged to defy all legal and social codes" of which the most notorious member is Ferragus. The story is truly, (as expressed by the editors at the close of the introduction), "the artistic projection of the City in which the historical reconstruction of the Restoration days is blended with a poet's timeless vision."

LOUISE DAVIS

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*A Short French Grammar for College Students.* By Foster Erwin Guyer. (New York, Harper and Bros., 1940. xv + 189 pp. \$1.20.)

This book was written to satisfy the needs of the beginner in French in the typical American college. The chief purpose in the author's mind was to develop a reading knowledge of the language through extensive reading of interesting material beginning with the earliest lessons. At the same time, he has provided for conversation and composition by means of well drawn up and consistent exercises. These objectives have been attained in the 114 pages of essential text.

The phonetic introduction is adequate in view of the limited aims set by the author. The treatment is simple but accurate. On page xi, however, the following statement is found: "The English equivalent (of French close *o*) is the second element of the diphthong in *boat*." The reference is evidently to the first element of the diphthong in that word. It is unfortunate that the proper I.P.A. symbol (*u*), as found on page x on the diagram of the vowel triangle is replaced elsewhere throughout the text by the symbol (*U*), which usually represents a sound similar to that in the English word "*put*." Moreover, use of such a symbol, the only uppercase one, detracts from the uniform appearance of the phonetic transcriptions, and tends to gain a certain emphasis, not intended, by its size alone. The only other correction the reviewer would suggest is the pronunciation of the mute *e* in the word *brusquement*, with the insertion of the proper symbol on pages 32 and 167.

The vocabulary has far more to commend it than the phonetic accuracy of the transcriptions. It has been carefully checked by use of the Vander Beke word book. Words of low frequency have been avoided.

Each rule is furnished with an abundance of illustrations. These are in the form of complete sentences of contemporary usefulness and interest.

Valuable addenda appear as *Supplementary Rules of Grammar* (pp. 115 through 127), equally well prepared, and a *Table of Verbs* (pp. 128 through 164). The latter not only furnishes synopses of conjugations and an index to the verbs treated, but also lists the verbs accurately according to the use of prepositions between such verbs and a following infinitive. The omission of the personal pronouns before the verb after the initial, complete and excellent presentation of the model verbs, has only the slight typographical saving of space to justify it. It would have been preferable to retain the pronouns throughout.

The reading is based on selections from Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*. The editor has adroitly adapted the text for student use while providing for continuity and the retention of the individual savor of the original.

The author has succeeded in composing a well-knit and useful text book amply fulfilling the objectives set forth in the preface. He has compressed the elements of French grammar into a small, handy volume. The contents and methods of presentation are those eminently suitable for the college student, for whom it is intended.

KYRL L. F. deGRAVELINES

University of California at Los Angeles

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*Commençons à Lire: First French Reader.* By E. B. de Sauzé and Agnès M. Dureau. (New York, Henry Holt & Co., 1940. vii + 274 + xxxiii. \$0.96.)

This is a first book written so freshly, so charmingly and so naturally as to disarm criticism. Dedicated by the authors to their former students, this small volume possesses a certain indefinable spirit of geniality that must have entered in the pleasure of its composition. As the reviewer read it, he could picture the collaborators' contest as to which anecdotes to include to bring smiles to the present teachers of French, formerly students of theirs, who would encounter their work.

The early portion of the book revolves about the story of Monsieur Dubois, who leaves France to teach in an American university. His family, Madame Dubois, Michel, and Jacqueline, accompany him. The narrative embodies an excellent opportunity to compare the basic resemblances and the superficial differences between the two civilizations, French and American.

Passages from *Les Misérables* dealing with Gavroche and Cosette occupy the second part of the book. This portion is intended to give the student a certain feeling of mastery over the language. Next follow short dialogues on forms of greetings, the seasons, sports and games, dates and the hours of the day, schools, and government. Three stories, *L'Escargot* (adapted from Lichtenberger's *Mon Petit Trott*), *Doudou* (after Boutet) precede the final selection, *L'Or de la Banque de France* (from Wilson's *A Bon Chat, Bon Rat*), a brief detective novel. Short poems by Montenaeken, Musset, Coppée, and Gautier are appropriately introduced. Many excellent cuts and maps further add to the interest and variety of the book.

The authors mention their educational creed early in the book (pp. v-vii), insisting on a high frequency vocabulary with a wide range, simplicity without resorting to the childish and the juvenile, and an offering of cultural material presented with skill and a human feeling that will stimulate the beginning student. Their text proves that theirs was not an empty theory, that it had years of practical and successful experience behind it. It is an outstandingly original, effective, lively and enjoyable work that will be welcomed by all those who are lucky enough to read it; we shall not add "and study it" for it is so interesting that it "studies itself," so to speak.

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#### GERMAN

Ludwig Tieck, *Der blonde Eckbert und Die schöne Magelone*. Edited by F. C. G. Schmidt and Astrid M. Williams, New York and London. (Appleton-Century Co., [1940], xxiv + 142 pp., \$1.10.)

With a growing tendency among instructors of intermediate German reading classes to select texts of recognized literary significance in preference to those that are purely entertaining, the rich contributions to German culture of the German Romantic movement could not long be overlooked by our textbook editors. Now "Der blonde Eckbert" and "Die schöne Magelone" appropriately introduce to our class-rooms the most popular and representative of the older Romanticists, Ludwig Tieck, in two of his most characteristic moods: the mingled fascination and dread inspired in man by the unfathomable in nature and in his own soul and the childlike nostalgia for medieval romance.

Both stories present choice specimens of the cultivated German prose of the late Eighteenth Century, in "Eckbert" as a detached and almost cold narration of the anything but prosaic content, in "Magelone" as the enthusiastic evocation of an idealized past. However, the statement in the editors' preface (p.v): "The language is beautiful, yet so simple that students of one or two years of German should experience no difficulty in understanding it," must be

interpreted with caution. Although the vocabulary is probably not too extensive for such students, the syntax is quite involved and peculiarly rich in subjunctive forms and the obliquely suggestive idiom characteristic of a subjunctive style: "Es war mir, als hätte ich ...," "es deuchte ihr, dass es ein Leichtes sein müsse ..." "der süsse Trieb, sein Vaterland wiederzusehen, bemeisterte sich aller seiner Sinne." Even in "Magelone" where Tieck cultivates a childlike wistfulness the syntax is scarcely more simple than in "Eckbert," and in both stories sentences of six lines or more in length appear on every page. It is therefore doubtful whether they could profitably be read before the fourth semester of college German. Moreover, one wonders whether it would be fair to Tieck's romanticism to expose to it students who are still belaboured with linguistic difficulties. I should imagine that the student compelled to look up every second idiom in the vocabulary (there are only a few footnotes) would not be able to recapture the "Waldeinsamkeit, Die mich erfreut, So morgen wie heut In ewger Zeit," and that if "Magelone" had to be read too slowly its childlike romance would become cloying.

A fairly extensive sampling of the vocabulary, which is designed to explain all idiomatic constructions, revealed only a few words and idioms omitted. Among these are "immer furchtbarer" and "den Sieg davon tragen," p. 8; "voller," p. 10; "einheimisch" in the sense at home, in which it occurs on p. 13; "sich darauf freuen," p. 18. In one of the few footnotes, that on page 7 explaining "wenn ich davon hatte reden hören," *reden*, which is of course merely the dependent infinitive, is erroneously included in the list of verbs which substitute the infinitive for the past participle when a dependent infinitive is used with them.

The fine scholarly introduction tracing Tieck's poetic development in considerable detail and the accompanying bibliography would seem wasted on students who have had only one or two years of German, but will be useful if the book is read as suggested above, by those more advanced. In an introduction of this scope some attention might well have been devoted to the rôle of Wackenroder and his enthusiasm for medieval art in the literary development of Tieck.

Mention should be made of the tasteful binding, attractive type, and in particular of the reproductions of Ludwig Richter's delightful illustrations to "Magelone."

RAYMOND IMMERWAHR

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*Intermediate German Readings.* By James A. Chiles (Ginn and Company, 1940. v + 297 pp.)

*Intermediate Readings* offers primarily material for extensive reading for students who have completed one year of high school or a semester's course at college. Occupying about one half of the volume are three selections which have appeared in many school editions, *Immensee*, *Höher als die Kirche* and the one act play *Einer muss heiraten*. These were chosen, according to the editor, for their thoroughly German content and their invariable appeal to the

young people. The remainder of the selections consists of short stories from contemporary German writers and of examples of well known German poetry. The writers represented in the short stories are Bosshart, Löns, Schönherr, Keller, Hesse, Kottenrodt and Steguweit. Among the poems we find the ballads "Der Erlkönig," "Des Sängers Fluch," "Der Sänger," and "Der Handschuh."

To facilitate rapid reading of the prose selections the editor has simplified involved instructions, abridged long descriptive passages and replaced rare words by common ones. The following examples from *Immensee* may illustrate the procedure: In the chapter "Die Kinder" Storm's version "und als Reinhard endlich trotz manches krummgeschlagenen Nagels seine Bank dennoch zustande gebracht hatte" has been simplified to "und als Reinhard seine Bank endlich fertig hatte." Long and difficult passages e.g., the one describing Reinhard's return from the Ratskeller to his room on Christmas Eve, have been omitted entirely. Unusual expressions like *Pesel*, *Diele*, *herumtranchieren*, *geschweigen*, etc. are replaced by words less rare. In a text which is primarily intended for rapid reading such changes, if carried out carefully, seem to be both justified and welcome.

Copious notes explaining grammatical difficulties and translating difficult idioms and expressions have been placed at the bottom of the text pages. The notes of *Immensee* and *Höher als die Kirche* have been edited independently of each other, so that either one may be taken up first. There are no questions and no exercises. The vocabulary has been made to conform with the minimum standard wordlist adapted by the American Association of Teachers of German. The editor provides a special list of strong verbs, irregular verbs and modal auxiliaries occurring in the text. For practical reasons the English equivalents might have been added.

The volume is enlivened by photographic portraits of the authors, by fine illustrations of the geographical localities and by drawings pertaining to scenes of the stories.

Slight changes might be suggested as follows: amend p. 6, l. 22 to "das passte gut zu ihren Augen"; restore p. 10, l. 10 "gelobte" for "versprach" and p. 18, l. 17 "Ei was" for "Ach was"; construe "Nicht doch" on p. 205, l. 25 as "Don't (ask such a question)." The only misprint was found on p. 55 in the note for l. 3.

Taken as a whole *Intermediate Readings* is a well arranged text for extensive reading. The short stories of the volume appear for the first time in an American school edition. They constitute delightful and stimulating reading material for our German classes. The collection will do much to make more interesting the student's task of acquiring a reading knowledge of German.

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#### ITALIAN

*Raccontini*. By Cincenzo Cioffari and John Van Horne. Book Two. (D. C. Heath and Co., 1940. iv + 58 pp. \$0.30.)

The anxiously awaited continuation of *Amici di scuola* (see *Forum*, March

1939, p. 43) is finally available. Those teachers who have already adopted *Amici di scuola* should not fail to welcome *Raccontini*. The diactic method of these first two booklets of the Italian graded readers series is identical: simplicity, clarity, gradation, and repetition are highly stressed.

Book Two contains about 290 new words (63 are cognates), and about 620 words in all, including repetition from Book One, and exclusive of proper names, numerals, and the most common articles and prepositions. Some 45 idioms are also added to the 42 of Book One. As for tense usage, the first part of *Raccontini* contains only the tenses used in *Amici di scuola*: present, present perfect, and future. In the second half, the past descriptive and the past absolute are introduced, but only in the historical anecdotes.

*Raccontini* is a very interesting reader. As the title implies, it consists of anecdotes—35 in all—of various types; humorous, cultural, and purely informational. Due to their nature, these anecdotes remain quickly impressed on the reader's mind, and ought to encourage class discussion in Italian.

All this, and the adequate exercises and vocabulary make *Raccontini* a highly recommendable companion to *Amici di scuola* as first semester reader.

CHARLES SPERONI

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*Marianna Sirca*. By Grazia Deledda. Edited with introduction, Notes and Vocabulary by Maro B. Jones and Armando T. Bissiri. (D. C. Heath and Co., 1940. xxiii + 185 pp. \$1.09.)

This is a really fine school edition of one of Deledda's best novels. It is, as one might expect, an abridged edition, but the novel does not suffer greatly by the abridgement, for only some secondary passages have been left out.

Particularly praiseworthy is the Introduction of the editors. In it the reader is briefly and clearly told the main facts about the geography, history, and culture of Sardinia, Deledda's birthplace and setting for the greatest part of her novels. One also finds in the Introduction an outline of the author's life, a discussion of her work, and a chronological list of her 53 novels. Moreover, the editors have included a two page discussion of the main characteristics of the Sardinian language as contrasted to the Tuscan. It is worth noting, however, that whereas Sardinian words and phrases are occasionally found in Deledda's works, in this abridged edition of *Marianna Sirca* only the word *tanca* [farm] appears.

As in most of Grazia Deledda's novels, love is the main theme of *Marianna Sirca*. Marianna, the heroine, who has spent the best part of her youth with an uncle, a priest, so that she might inherit his possessions after his death, goes with her father to spend a few days on a lonely farm where she falls in love with Simone, a bandit. Her family is completely shocked at the news, and Marianna's cousin, Sebastiano, in order to defend the honor of the family decides to put an end to the engagement by shooting Simone. The latter is very seriously wounded, but a priest who is called to administer the last sacrament, has also time to marry the two lovers just before the bandit dies. In the complete edition Marianna later consents to marry a rich landowner because his eyes resemble those of Simone.

Due to the simplicity of language and construction, and to the rich notes and adequate vocabulary, *Marianna Sirca* could be read successfully in a second semester Italian class; however, because of the lack of exercises, and because of its excellent literary style and characteristically Sardinian setting, this reader would be especially suited to second and even third year courses.

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#### SPANISH

*La Vida de un Estudiante en Madrid.* By Pío Baroja. Edited by Edin Brenes and D. H. Patterson. (Harper & Brothers, 1940. 86 pp. of text with notes, vocabulary 41 pp. \$1.00)

Here we have a book that brings us a story of the popular and always appreciated Spanish author, Pío Baroja, in a form that can be read and appreciated by beginning students of college level. The story is an adaptation of the first part of Baroja's philosophical novel *El árbol de la ciencia*.

*La Vida de un Estudiante en Madrid* tells us the life of Andrés Hurtado, a young man studying medicine. We follow Andrés through medical school until he receives his degree. We also watch him begin to delve into philosophy in an attempt to find one which would satisfy him. It is the description of his life as a student, more than anything else that will interest students of Spanish. The description of class room procedures, the attitudes and activities of students make us realize that the situation in a school in Spain is not too different from our own. The scenes in the medical school show a familiarity with the situation which only an author who himself had studied and practiced medicine in Spain could present. Besides this presentation of student life approximately one-fourth of the novel is given over to a philosophical discussion which has little to do with the plot of the story.

In the opinion of this writer the book is best suited for use by students in the second semester of college Spanish. It would not be recommended for use in secondary schools because of the nature of the material rather than because of the difficulty of the text. The reviewer doubts that the philosophical nature of the text and the philosophical discussions would interest secondary school students.

Notes on the text are placed at the foot of each page for ready reference. These notes are very complete and comment on idiomatic difficulties and important literary, historical and philosophical references. The vocabulary too is very complete with many cross references. Even irregular verb forms are given, with reference to the infinitive. Many of the words are found in the first 1000 words of Buchanan's word count *A Graded Spanish Word Book*, and are marked with an asterisk. There are no exercises of any kind included in the book, but the material presented in the text lends itself well to oral discussion. No errors were noted in the reading of the text or examination of the vocabulary and notes.

K. A. BOWMAN

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*Quinito en España.* By Lawrence A. Wilkins. (Henry Holt and Company, 1940, Preface xiv, text, 378 pp., appendix, 92 pp. \$1.56.)

*Quinito* is a modern textbook. In conformity with the latest scientific pedagogical data, it is keeping abreast with the most recent trend in language teaching at the Junior and Senior High School levels. It is a response to those skeptics who, though they had agreed upon the desirability of reading ability, said texts whose primary consideration and structure was toward the reading objective, were lacking. Here at last is a book whose sole technique is planned to develop reading ability. With this in mind, the book treats grammar as a means to an end (reading ability) rather than as an end in itself.

As to its method, one can first of all say that it has a most distinct unity. The very first pages, which contain sketches of the persons taking part in the narrative, form a visual type of motivation which should be very effective in the young reader's mind. The short, but complete remarks about each person give the prospective reader a bird's-eye view of the reading selections.

In the second place, the reading matter, upon which all exercises are based, has a continuity of action and interest, all of which clarify and give meaning to the sketches mentioned above. The story is very simple, but it has, nevertheless, a completeness which gives satisfaction. It deals with the adventures of two Spanish boys while traveling from Astorga to Madrid and back during their vacation. The story is one which should attract the high school age because it concerns two modern boys in a modern Spain, having experiences which would be common to anyone who has traveled through small villages. There is a considerable amount of cultural material about some of the cities mentioned.

Lastly, the grammar section which follows each reading selection (of one page average) is in itself very uniform in that each section is comprised of four or five parts: *vocabulario*, *modismos y expresiones*, *ejercicio de pronunciación* (prevalent at first), *ejercicios de lectura*, and *ejercicios de gramática*. However, within this close uniformity, there is a great variation, especially in the two last-named divisions. Herein lies the *forte* of the grammar treatment in this text. The exercises in the *ejercicio de lectura* and *ejercicio de gramática* are based on the reading, not on the preceding three or four, but on the one immediately before. This is why the reading selection is short, but comprehensive. The review of the preceding lessons is taken care of by a *lección de repaso* which occurs at regular intervals, that is, after six reading lessons have been covered. The exercises themselves, both in the *lectura* and *gramática*, are of many different types, and what is more, involve only the use of Spanish. They consist of comparisons, substitutions, blank-filling, and many others.

The author makes it clear enough that his textbook is in response to the cry for a newer type of book which will fulfill the needs of the modern way of studying foreign languages in the Junior and Senior High Schools.

SALVADORE DE VERA PAEZ, JR.

University of California at Los Angeles

## NEWS AND NOTES

### REORGANIZATION OF THE MODERN LANGUAGE FORUM

Upon recommendation of a special committee, appointed some months ago, the Executive Council of the Modern Language Association of Southern California has authorized a revision of the editorial policy of the *Modern Language Forum* and a reorganization of its staff. For some time past there has been a feeling among the membership of the Association that the journal was offering its readers an abundance of scholarly material, but that articles of a pedagogical character, of practical value to teachers, were conspicuously lacking. Moreover there has been an expressed desire on the part of many teachers that the journal should also serve as a medium of news and information concerning the schools of the region.

The reasons for the present lack of balance in the journal are quite obvious. In the past few years the *Modern Language Forum* has acquired a national reputation and has numerous subscribers outside of Southern California. For this reason there has of late been no dearth of scholarly contributions from all parts of the country. In fact, the Editor has recently found it necessary to reject as many articles from outside contributors as he has accepted. Even now there is on hand a supply of good, scholarly, publishable material sufficient for two issues after the present one. On the other hand desirable articles on practical, methodological subjects are extremely rare. The one by Professor W. V. Kaulfers in the present issue is the only really good contribution of this sort which the Editor has received in more than a year. Moreover it is obvious that the Editor is not in a position to solicit such articles. Items of news interest are only rarely sent in to the journal and then usually too late for publication.

In order to meet this situation the Executive Council has authorized the appointment of Mr. Arthur B. Forster of Los Angeles City College as Assistant Editor for a department to be devoted to pedagogical articles and of Miss Alice Hindson of the John H. Francis Polytechnic High School as Assistant Editor for a department of news and notes of the schools and of the Association. These new Assistant Editors will take office at once and will collaborate in the preparation of the September issue of the *Modern Language Forum*.

Mr. Forster will solicit the contribution of articles dealing with teaching methods, will pass upon the merits of papers, select those which are suitable for publication, and then transmit them to the Editor for final approval. Contributors of articles of this nature are requested to send their papers to Mr. Forster in final form for publication. All contributions must be double-spaced, original typescript (not carbon copies) and must be received at least six weeks before the proposed date of publication.

Miss Hindson will maintain contact with all the schools of the region and will gather all material of general interest. Members are requested to send her information regarding such matters as changes in teaching staff, enrollment in classes, dramatic and film presentations, special projects, in short all such

things which are likely to be of interest to colleagues in other schools. It is suggested that a person be appointed for each district and for each of the larger schools to collect such materials and transmit them to Miss Hindson. She will then compile the material and cast it into form for publication.

We welcome Mr. Forster and Miss Hindson into the Editorial Staff of the *Modern Language Forum* and we bespeak the loyal cooperation of all members of the Association to the task of making the journal better than ever before.

(—Ed.)

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#### MEMBERSHIP IN THE M. L. A. S. C.

According to figures compiled by the Past-Secretary, Miss Josephine Indovina, the Modern Language Association of Southern California had 328 members during the fiscal year 1939-1940. This membership is distributed as follows:

Junior High Schools	44 members	13.4 percent
Senior High Schools	162	49.4
Junior Colleges	60	18.3
Universities	45	13.7
Miscellaneous	17	5.2
Total	328 members	100.0 percent
Men	80	24.3
Women	248	75.7
Total	328 members	100.0 percent

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#### ALPHA MU GAMMA CONVENTION

The third national convention of the collegiate foreign language honor society, Alpha Mu Gamma, was held March 17-19 at Los Angeles City College. An extensive program of business and social meetings, entertainment by the delegates in the four languages included in the organization, and excursions to places of foreign atmosphere within the city, culminated in a banquet attended by seventy-five student delegates, faculty sponsors, and distinguished guests.

With the installation of the new chapter at the University of California at Los Angeles on April 29, 1940, there are now fourteen chapters of Alpha Mu Gamma in junior colleges and four-year institutions:

- Alpha—Los Angeles City College
- Beta—Phoenix Junior College, Arizona
- Gamma—Long Beach Junior College, California
- Delta—San Diego State College, California
- Epsilon—Chico State College, California
- Zeta—Santa Ana Junior College, California
- Eta—St. Helen's Hall Junior College, Portland, Oregon

Theta—San Francisco State College, California

Iota—Arizona State College, Tempe, Arizona

Kappa—Worthington Junior College, Worthington, Minnesota

Lambda—Southwest Missouri State Teachers College, Springfield, Missouri

Mu—Kansas State Teachers College, Pittsburg, Kansas

Nu—University of California at Los Angeles

Alpha in Japan—Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan

The aim of Alpha Mu Gamma is to stimulate and reward excellence in foreign language scholarship among students in the junior colleges and in the lower divisions of colleges and universities, as well as to promote tolerance and understanding of foreign cultures. Students of all languages are accepted as members of local chapters, which thereby become truly international in character. Information regarding Alpha Mu Gamma may be obtained from the undersigned.

LOREN M. HENDRICKSON

*Los Angeles City College*

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#### THE M. L. A. S. C. PICNIC

The Association Picnic has been arranged for October 5, 1940, at Fern Dell in Griffith Park. It will probably begin about 10:30 a. m. and continue until about 2 p. m. If any of the members wish to stay until later in the afternoon, the reservation of the picnic site will make this possible. A musical program has been prepared, and members will find the location a delightful spot to visit with their friends. Members and their guests will provide their own refreshments, with the exception of hot coffee, which will be furnished by the Association. Water and cooking facilities are, of course, available, and there will be ample space for the large crowd that we expect.

THE PICNIC COMMITTEE

Carter Benner, *Chairman*.